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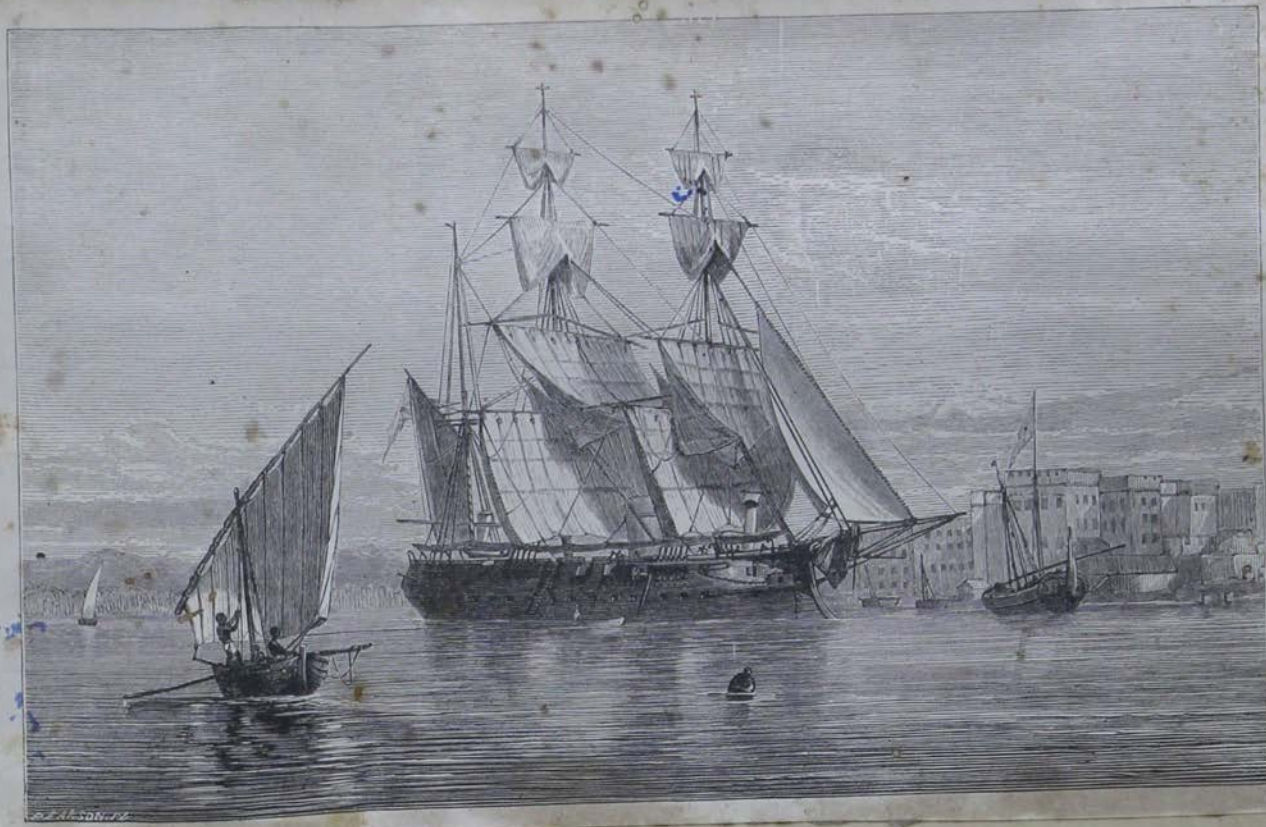

SLAVE-CATCHING

IN

THE INDIAN OCEAN.

A RECORD OF NAVAL EXPERIENCES.

BY

CAPTAIN COLOMB, R.N.

58938

a.c.

'I pray you, in your letters,
When you shall these unlucky deeds relate,
Speak of me as I am; nothing extenuate,
Nor set down aught in malice.'

The Moor of Venice.

LONDON:
LONGMANS, GREEN, AND CO.
1873.

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58938

MY COMPANIONS IN THE SCENES DESCRIBED

WILL BE MY BEST CRITICS:

TO THEM, THEREFORE, I DEDICATE MY BOOK.

PREFACE.

Most of the notes from which the following pages have been written, and much of the actual text, were prepared on board ship without any thought of publication, and chiefly as a relaxation in the intervals of active service afloat.

The great public interest now developed on the question of East African slavery, led me to consider that, however incomplete my notes might be, a view of the whole question as seen from its sea-face could hardly fail to prove interesting, if not useful.

While, therefore, I have not attempted to disturb the form in which my observations happened to be written, I have endeavoured to supply such a connexion between them as should make a readable book.

I have also endeavoured to correct, by a reference to the best authorities, those erroneous views which a mere relation of personal experience might engender.

In my endeavour to represent a true picture to my

readers, I have not hesitated to use strong local colouring; and where the ludicrous and the painful came before me with the strange impartiality of real life, I have advisedly preserved their contact.

It is impossible to acquire a personal knowledge of African slavery without adopting strong views, and perhaps being betrayed into using stronger expressions than a less terrible subject would call forth. The reflexions to which my experiences have given rise, will not always flow smoothly with the current of public thought, and I fear the expressions in which they are embodied may not always escape the charge of undue strength. But I have felt that on such a disputed and entangled question as East African slavery, an eye-witness is bound to try to state what seems to him the truth, however much it might leave him open to misconception. In any case, I trust it may be admitted that I have taken some pains to form just opinions.

My thanks are due to many of my brother officers, who have kindly assisted me by notes, sketches, and photographs.

March, 1873.

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SLAVE-CATCHING IN THE INDIAN OCEAN.

CHAPTER I.

OUTWARD.

On a certain afternoon in the month of August 1868, I found myself, in company with two friends who intended to see the last of me, wending my way down to the docks at Southampton. I was about to take passage for Alexandria and the East on board the good ship 'Damascus,' for I had been appointed to command H.M.S. 'Dryad' on the East Indian station, and was to leave England that day. I think, so far as I can now remember, that I had very little thought, and certainly no knowledge, of what was to be for the next two years my chief if not my sole duty—namely, the suppression of the East African slave trade. I presume my thoughts were those usual to any naval officer undertaking a legitimate but unknown service. First, a readiness to do it, whatever it was; secondly, some confidence in his average ability to deal with all cases as they might arise. It is true my

professional brethren had usually, in their congratulations relative to my appointment, hoped that I should capture 'plenty of dhows,' but how this capturing of dhows was done, and what kind of thing the dhow was, could only be manifest to those who had the personal knowledge which I lacked.

Such as have travelled by overland route need not be told how we made, after a first inspection of the ship, the usual and imperative purchases of a folding-chair, an armful of newspapers, and a bundle of the stupidest shilling novels, having more regard to the largeness of the print, and the distance between the lines of the latter, than to the matter contained in them. All such travellers know how hard the regulation P. and O. seats are; what an outcast a man is without a chair of his own; and how little he reads of anything sensible on his voyage. Nor need any traveller be told how—I being finally on board—my friends and I drank each other's healths and 'our next merry meeting,' and then fell into somewhat of a sad silence. Such is the routine of parting all the world over.

From our silence we are roused by the ringing of bells, which, inasmuch as it resembles the call to passengers to embark from Hungerford to Gravesend, makes light of the journey I am about to travel; and, inasmuch as it resembles the man-of-war's call to 'fire-stations,' reminds me of the end for which my journey is undertaken. Then I give my last letter, with a last *post scriptum*, to one of my friends; they are hurried on shore; the paddles make trial of

their strength, and we gradually widen our distance from the quay.

My friends, and everybody else's friends, wave their handkerchiefs, and we all wave ours in return. But I, in nautical phrase, 'go to windward' here, for my friends hoist their colours on the ends of their sticks, and wave them there, so that long after the other handkerchiefs have become but a light foam on the top of a dark billow, my two signals still remind me of the particular items in the crowd who will miss me when I am gone. At this period my servant appears. I ask him if he is not 'all right?' He says he is, but seems to me all wrong; I had seen amongst the last distinguishable objects a young girl—his wife—trying to wave her handkerchief, but failing, and breaking down in a passion of tears! Alack! some whom I have left at home know the time of our departure, and are perhaps no better employed.

We are hardly outside the docks before a differently-toned perambulating bell calls on us to drop the curtain on the first act of our drama, and begin to eat. And here let me remark, that this eating is really the worst part of the overland route. I dreaded the sound of that bell three days after I first heard it, and I dread the thought of it now. It began at 9 A.M., when you fell to at a strong breakfast. At noon you were rung to a lunch, just heavy enough to spoil your appetite for dinner, whose knell sounded at three. At six the bell attacked you for tea; and if it let you alone to take or avoid 'biscuits and grog' at nine, it was probably because your digestion was

thought to be pretty well done for by that time. Those who have not travelled by P. and O. will probably say, 'How very weak you must be to allow yourself to be commanded by the bell to eat when you know it is not good for you?' Those who have so travelled will make no such remark.

Being August, we, the passengers, must endure some of the hottest hours the world knows of, in the Red Sea: consequently, we are but few. We are under fifty in number, and shall drop many before we see Egypt. But I am tempted in this matter to give a word of advice to those who travel as we did. Take a hot passage rather than a crowded boat. To be doubled, trebled, or quadrupled up, with perfect strangers for three weeks or more, in a space the size of a four-post bedstead, so as to pass down the Red Sea in a temperature of 95° instead of 100° is not, I think, an economy of comfort. Though it is said that a gentleman, name unknown, descending from the Red Sea, Dante-like to 'another place,' sent up an immediate express for his great-coat, yet the two or three days of extreme heat undergone in passing through it in August or September are fully balanced by the air, quiet and space, then available throughout the whole trip. Of things which are awful to witness, a crowded P. and O. ship, with a 90° thermometer, such as may be seen in the season at Aden once a week, is one; and I should say to intending voyagers that it would be pleasanter for them to spread themselves out a little more instead of going in a body during the months of October and November.

Of course, in our good ship, most of us at first assumed towards each other a proper attitude of gloomy hostility. There are, I believe, only three demeanours to strangers with whom you are thrown into contact, known to science—the Englishman's reticent shyness, the Frenchman's openhearted communicativeness, and the American's vigorous inquisition. I think the Englishman's plan may be defended on philosophic grounds; but, without entering on so abstruse an enquiry, may we not say that the Englishman's method is the only one applicable to all cases? Two Englishmen can glare at each other with great peace and comfort. Two Frenchmen cannot be both comfortably communicative, for each will wish the other to be silent. Two Americans cannot be satisfactory company when the whole desire of each is to question the other. An Englishman satisfies a Frenchman, for he listens well; he satisfies an American, for he represents a mysterious oyster, to be opened at his leisure. A Frenchman does not satisfy an Englishman, for the latter would rather be let alone; he affords no interest to the American, telling him at once what he would rather find out by cross-examination. The American suits neither the Englishman nor the Frenchman. One does not like to be interrogated, and the other thinks interrogation a tedious process. Be all this as it may, we got on very comfortably for the first few days on the English system in the 'Damascus.'

But the smooth waters off the coast of Portugal, the glittering sunlight and the balmy air, seemed to make us blow like flowers, and we opened our leaves to

each other to that limited extent which befits early acquaintance. The first symptoms of this sociability might be detected in more or less sustained efforts at learning one another's names. A method much in vogue was to mark your bird down to his or her proper chair, and then read the name—usually placed on the back—which henceforward you attached to its presumed owner. This process, however, had its drawbacks: sometimes it was misleading, and sometimes disappointing. If you marked Mr. Clifford Charteris into Mr. James Jones's chair, and thereafter called him 'Jones,' you did not learn till the end of the voyage why he always looked at you with a sinister aspect, and was always about to say something which he never said. Nor are you better off as regards Jones; for though he sits in his own chair, you know it is not his, and probably he is an insoluble mystery to you ever more. It is disappointing too, for I opened a mild conversation with a very pretty girl off Finisterre, which ripened into a pleasant acquaintance before we got to the latitude of Lisbon, at which point I became desirous of knowing the name of my fair friend. I accordingly watched my opportunity, and duly marked her down. It was disappointing, although probably true, to learn, on the authority of a blue label at her back, that she was only 'Baggage for Calcutta.'

Conversation at dinner-time naturally flowed more briskly than at other periods, but I am bound to say neither the range of thought nor of subject was extensive. The speed of the ship, the chances of weather, the badness of that dish, that wine, or that

waiter, furnished fruitful topics. It is always the badness, and never the goodness of these things, on the outward route, for the comparison is between the English shore fare and P. and O. sea fare. On the homeward route it is the other way.

Politics, of course, come in for their share of discussion; but times are calm, and there is a Conservative majority on board. Theology is occasionally tried, but it is found that everyone has very strong and very opposite views on such questions, and the topic is soon marked 'dangerous.' The heat of the Red Sea is much more fruitful. The general conclusion seems to be that extreme heat, when it is several thousand miles away, is not at all difficult to bear; and that those in the middle of it are generally mistaken as to its discomforts.

Only once is there a reference to the slave trade, when one of the officers details how, not so long ago, a P. and O. steamer having fallen in with a full slaver, its unfortunate cargo famished and exhausted from lack of food and water, was relieved by supplies of both from the English passenger ship, whose humanity thus became a mercy to the unfortunate slaves, and so much extra profit in the hands of their owners.

A great deal is said of the delight of a P. and O. voyage in fine weather; to me it only seems an absolute and unavoidable waste of time. You see nothing, hear nothing, and do nothing. If one could be rendered torpid at Southampton and be restored at Alexandria, it would be better, for then one would save wear and tear; but as it is, one gets through so

much life without living it. If I complain thus to old P. and O. stagers, they shake their heads, and say it used not to be so in the old days of the Company. 'There used then to be champagne for dinner.' This being an answer in full to my complaint, I can only say 'Oh,' and drop the conversation. But I think to myself that even champagne for dinner —especially if it were bad—might substitute active feeling of some kind for the sort of vegetable discomfort in which I live. Much of the spurious pleasure which is said to be drawn from the life of a mail packet may arise from its novelty to the mass of the passengers. To the naval man this is denied, and he merely treads the weary round of his everyday life, without its everyday comforts and associations.

Gibraltar made its usual pleasant break in the voyage, and revisiting haunts well known to me in days long past staved off some of the monotony into which my thoughts seemed hardening. It was at Gibraltar I first noticed that our voyagers were passing out of the coldly civil stage into that of simmering friendliness. For a moment it flashed upon me that I was destined to witness all further stages of acquaintance, through unreasoning affection to open war. I therefore found a lazy and absolutely useless employment in speculating at what points the different stages would be reached.

From Gibraltar to Malta, fine weather and smooth water. Bell, followed by mastication, followed by indigestion. Three lines of novel; a doze with your heels resting on a backgammon board: 'Sorry to dis-

turb you; may I take your backgammon board?' Three more lines of novel; doze; a croquet-disc on your ankle: 'Hope it did not hurt you?' 'Not at all.' Three more lines of novel; doze. Bell; followed by indigestion. Croquet, chat, novel. Bell, worse indigestion. Constitutional up and down the deck. Bell, indigestion, constitutional. Chat, grog (without bell), and bed.

This movement *da capo*, for the regulation number of days, brings us to the blazing shores of Malta, likened by Byron to a little military hot-house, and generally called 'A great big Holystone' in the midshipmen's berth.

The chief pleasure of Malta to most naval men is its associations with their early days in Her Majesty's service. Years ago the only large naval force we had was in the Mediterranean, and few men of five-and-twenty or thirty years standing can revisit Malta without many thoughts of what happened 'in old Parker's time.' We were then either 'oldsters' or 'youngsters' in the berth, that is, were either those who thrashed, or who got thrashed. But for either thrasher or thrashed, how cheering it was to arrive in Malta harbour when our 'logs' and 'watch-bills' were 'up,' and when the first lieutenant had no crow to pluck with us. For then there were ices to be eaten on shore, rides to be taken, swims in Bighi Bay, boat-sailing to seaward. Wonderful omelettes for dinner at Civita Vecchia after visiting the 'Baked Friars.'

But on the other hand what a terrible thing to come into Malta harbour with all these visions before you, and suddenly to hear the awful voice of autho-

rity adjudge you to have your leave stopped for a month and 'a week's watch and watch' on the bitts or the paddle-box, as the case might be! Then, what a dreadful thing it was to see the bumboat come alongside, with all those fairy fruits which the world ceases to produce after each man's twentieth year, and to find no money to buy with!

If I professed in these light pages to draw solid information from each place I visit, I must here give up my task, for the few hours I spent at Malta, did but exhume the bones of dead days, and hide all things with their dust.

Out to sea as darkness was falling. Groups on deck watching the glitter of the lights in the undulating water till they fade away. Softened chatter here and there, not to disturb the natural harmony. Then grog and bed.

The demeanour of the passengers has undergone a change for the worse, since our visit to Malta, as I very soon perceive. They are segregating fast. Next day there are clans on board; on the third day the clans are hostile. The chief of the Ha niltons assumed the usual throne of the leader of the Mackenzies. It is whispered that he did it on purpose, and meant war. The lady of the Mackenzies thinks out loud, that it is most unpleasant to have to deal with people of that sort (meaning the clan Hamilton). The small clan of the O'Connors show a disposition to aggrandisement, and are making diplomatic overtures in several quarters to increase their territory. 'Do come with us across the Isthmus,' says the envoy of the O'Connors to

one of the bewildered, round whom this clanship had grown up like a mushroom in the dark, 'do come with our party across, it will be so pleasant.'

The bewildered can only accede, but looks wistfully towards the Hamiltons from whom by a too fatal facility he has separated himself.

All this came upon me like a dream; I had but a faint notion of what was going on, and yet found I must express only bad opinions of some people in the presence of other people if I wished to retain their favourable estimation. Several more or less vigorous verbal skirmishes took place between the different clans. Rival claims to baths, chairs, backgammon boards, or books, formed ample grounds for hostilities, and I thought it rather hard to be obliged in politeness to the Hamiltons and Mackenzies to uphold each of their views in succession on appeal after a skirmish; and it became somewhat awful when the O'Connors presented a third view for my friendly acceptance.

In a light way, I have tried to picture what we must all own to be a sad blot on English character. Not perhaps, its want of charity, but certainly its want of comprehension that when the community is small and the privations great, happiness is dependent entirely on charity, its want too, of direct application of that magnificent law to your own thoughts, words, and acts. It is quite certain that in the good ship 'Damascus' there was an average selection of excellent men and women of the upper middle classes. It is equally certain that there arose among them some very bitter

dislikes in the course of a fortnight's voyage together; and that these dislikes were allowed to display themselves very openly indeed. We preach the universal rule of charity, but we make everything that comes under our own action the exception which proves the rule.

We arrived at Alexandria in the morning early; and breakfast, packing, bill-paying, and embarkation in the small steam tug which was to take us on shore, were mingled together so that it was difficult to say which was which, until we saw Captain Ephesian waving his friendly hand to us from the distant gunwale of the old 'Damascus,' wherein so far as lay in his power, we had certainly been well cared for.

The steamer landed us close to the train, into which we proceeded to struggle with British vigour through a crowd of Nubians, Turks, French, Egyptians, Arabs, English and Italians. But such a train! Carriages of English make, that had once been in order, now cracked with heat and neglect; doors that would not open, windows that would not shut; bunches of horse-hair sticking out of the cushions, and all looking less like vehicles for actual service than ancient relics. The railway itself came down to the beach in a casual kind of way as though it were not quite sure whether it ought to be there, or somewhere else.

It was the first time I had seen the railway, and it pained me to observe that it ran over the snipe ground where a brother midshipman and I had so many years before enjoyed a remarkable day's sport, shot and shot

about with a joint-stock single barrel, which if the ordinary laws of physics held good where midshipmen are concerned would have withheld these pages from the public. The landing-place also used to be thronged with donkey-boys and their beasts, and it was disappointing to miss the donkeys; my only consolation was that everything connected with the railway looked as though it had just been put out of the way there for the present, and would shortly be removed.

Being warned out of three several carriages by the *locum tenens* of the clans Hamilton, Mackenzie, and O'Connor, respectively, I found myself at length settled down with a pleasant party of outcasts from all clans; and then we wandered out of the city accompanied by a polyglot mob, who ran along by our side, yelling for 'Backsheesh,' and tumbling over one another.

If the journey to Cairo by the Mah-Moudi canal and the Nile in old times was more romantic, the modern journey by rail is more singular. The incongruity of the whole thing never ceased to trouble me. The ideas properly connected with an English railway journey are solidity, permanence, precision, and speed. Those present to my mind when travelling under the auspices of the Egyptian Transit Administration were instability and dawdling. I believe our actual speed was considerable, but from the general aspect of things one felt that was just as it might be. If steam got low at about the stoker's prayer-time, one felt that the Prophet would be charged with the duty of raising it again. If the guard pulled the

train up to leave a bag of lentils with a venerable friend mounted on donkey-back by the way-side, was not Allah great? The line itself, is no doubt excellently laid, and smooth as the Great Western; but it seemed all the same to stray through the country in a temporary manner, ready to be removed as soon as people had found out the way to Cairo.

If I am to judge by the stories I learned at Cairo, from gentlemen who knew something about the interior economy of the railway, my instincts did not betray me into much exaggeration. I was told, as a fact, that in the early days of the administration, the Egyptians, whose duty it was to fill the stuffing boxes, could not be prevented from selling the grease, and filling the stuffing boxes with sand scraped up from the permanent way. 'Was not sand as good as grease to the true Moslem? Wherefore then all this fuss? Let the Frankish devilment proceed since they will have it.'

Nay more; even in the short journey from Alexandria to Cairo, the train in which I travelled suffered assault and capture at the hands of the Believers. It happened thus:—At one station where we were to stop, there was something in the nature of a fair going on, and there was a very large crowd awaiting us, at and about the station. Fences, or railings, are yet ideal in Egypt, and a fatherly old gentleman on the platform, with a big bell, and another with the danger and safety flags rolled up as a handy weapon, seemed to be making up their minds to act on the

defensive, while the crowd seemed equally ready to assume the offensive if thwarted.

The moment we pulled up, matters resolved themselves into chaos. The bell sounded alternately clear or muffled, according to its application to the hard or soft portions of the Egyptian bodies. The danger and safety flags flashed about amongst the crowd, but produced less noisy effects. The mob, however, were altogether too strong for the guardians of the train, and though many turbans flew, and the destruction of robes was considerable, those who wished for passages seemed generally to make good their footing, at least on the steps and buffers. Then, indeed, quiet was restored, the bell and flag men smoothed their ruffled feathers, the signal was given, and we proceeded, our new passengers holding on how they could.

Our arrival at Cairo was as unpremeditated as our departure from Alexandria. We seemed to get out by the road side, and bestowing ourselves in the transit omnibuses, started for the city, and there being no particular road, our journey was like crossing the Channel in a heavy sea; we passed the O'Connors' omnibus in a ditch, but could not proffer them any assistance, and in the course of time, they also, with the rest of us, were enjoying the airy rooms of the Oriental Hotel.

My disappointment in revisiting Cairo was excessive. My last visit had been paid in Mahommed Ali's time, when Europeans were few and far between, and Orientalism crossed your path at every turn. Now all was running in a French groove, and the Orientalism left seemed spurious. Utterly Europeanised, Cairo is no

longer the perfect type of an eastern city it used to be in old times. Then you hardly saw a carriage in the streets: now there are many. European dress has invaded the territory of the beautiful flowing Oriental habit, combining but ill with the Arab features and the red fez. French shops, French names to the streets, and French manufactures present themselves at all points, and raise in the Englishman that mild animosity which he feels towards everything not initiated by his own nation. I could not even ride a donkey with satisfaction, for French predominated in the donkey-boys' conglomerate speech.

The journey from Alexandria to Cairo had been very trying in the matter of dust and heat, and the road lay through rich cultivated plains. When, therefore we assembled on the platform prepared to do the further journey of ninety-five miles across the desert to Suez, we were not easy in our minds. Nothing seemed to soothe our terrors so much as the purchase of water-bottles, blue veils and 'goggles.' Yet they were needless. The passage over the waste was cool, dustless, and pleasant.

After some six hours of a sandy and rocky plain we begin to put our heads out of window to be on the look-out for Suez. Soon we perceive at the foot of a grand range of rugged hills, on our right and in front, a group of beavers' nests, hardly distinguishable in form or colour from the surrounding land; behind these rise some larger, dilapidated buildings, then glimpses of sea and ships: this is Suez. On our left a distant yellowish bank extends, and above it strange mechanisms spread gi-

gantic arms. This is the Suez Canal, and the machines are the excavators. Our train now strolls quietly amongst mud huts, houses, camels, donkeys and children, and the latter take up the eternal cry of 'Backsheesh' and pursue us with it till we gain the outer works of the hotel, and then they shout it through the only paling hereabout. We, on our side, having disembarked opposite the hotel, find ourselves close to an arm of the sea. A shady courtyard festooned with creeping plants welcomes us to its shelter; refreshment buffets offer us cool drinks. We yawn, stretch ourselves, and prepare to settle down for a quiet rest, when we find that we are all pouring out again in the direction of a small steamer hard by. No one seems to know why we should do this, but it appears the proper thing, and in point of fact, before we have time to make inquiries, we are steaming away to sea, and leaving Suez behind us. There are strange faces gathered in a group in this steamer, their owners sitting disdainfully on their luggage. They are the Marseilles passengers I learn, and they clearly look down on us from Southampton. Two P. and O. vessels are blowing off steam in the offing, and have blue-peters flying. One is the 'Gozo' for Bombay; and the other the 'Mahableshwur,' for Calcutta. We go alongside the 'Gozo,' my steamer, first; and I find that a very small following accompanies me. I bid good-bye heartily, and with a pang, to the rival clans and the outcasts. We are all seeking our fortunes in distant lands, and this is the last link which binds us to home. Then the little steamer goes away to discharge the rest of her pas-

sengers into the 'Mahableshwur;' and we, some half dozen passengers per 'Gozo,' stand upon a waste of deck, and gaze blankly at each other.

Time passes. We are steaming down between the mountains trodden by sacred feet when the world was young; they are grandly wild and barren, but night soon hides them from us. It is warmer than it was and we speculate on the approaching heat. Anon, speculation has no power to interest us. We had gone from the frying-pan, if not into the fire—certainly under the grate. There was a struggle between the air and water as to which should surmount the heat of the other. Blasts of parching gases met you at all corners and baulked your desire for breath. Your eyes were dry and sore, and your lips cracked like withered leaves. Standing was worse than sitting, and lying down was worse than either. Talking withered your throat; and keeping silence wearied your soul. Sleep was but a restless struggle with a red hot night-mare, and waking but a fevered sleep. The air was full of dry ashes, and it choked the moisture from your skin like a pounce box. Oh, for breath! only for breath! But there was no breath breathable here. Let us imitate the water buffaloes and lie up to our chins in a bath all day. Alas, the water is hard and dry, and refreshment from it is a vain desire. One minute's anticipation of relief is followed by multiplied tortures. There is *no* respite and no change. Glowing morning rushes on to fiery noon. Fiery noon fades to blood-red evening; and blood-red evening to black and sultry night.

But scorching, roasting heat, never leaves us, nor forsakes us!

There are nearly three days of this horror, and then the weather cools as we are approaching Perim, and the straits of Bab-el-Mandeb.

Perim, as all the world knows, is a barren little spot with a lighthouse on it just at the entrance to the Red Sea. Its population consists of a small detachment of native infantry under the command of a subaltern, the wives and followers of this force, an engineer who brews fresh water for the people and looks after the lighthouse, and one or two other stray individuals. It is not a very lively place, it may be supposed, being perfectly destitute of vegetation, of scenery, and water. But I afterwards found that the denizens of the place rated their situation as very far beyond that of the inhabitants of Aden.

'There's always a breeze here, you see,' was the sufficient explanation.

There is a capital gossiping story extant as to how Perim became British which I may as well tell in this place, without pledging myself to its truth. France, longing for a *pied-à-terre* in these waters, fixed on Perim, then an unoccupied waste as a suitable spot, and orders were despatched to the French Admiral to plant the French flag on the Island. He came to Aden in his flag-ship, on his way to the Red Sea, and was hospitably entertained by the then Governor. The Governor was most anxious to know the cause of the visit, but the Admiral kept his counsel for some time, until on one fatal evening, after an extra-good

dinner I presume, he confided to the Governor that he purposed sailing next morning for Perim. My experience of our diplomats in eastern territory is that whatever faults they may commit, the quality of not seeing as far through a mill-stone as their neighbours cannot be charged against them. The Governor gathered the design of the Admiral, and devised the means of frustrating it in one and the same moment. There was a ship of the Indian navy lying in the harbour, and the Governor sitting at his dinner table, wrote a pencil note to her commander, thus:—'Get steam up with all speed, and plant the British flag on Perim Island.' The steamer was off before the Admiral went to bed, and Perim was a British island in about eight hours.

In the 'Gozo' we passed Perim by night, and the manner of its acquisition did not disturb our slumbers. Early next afternoon we were enveloped in fine black dust. The 'Gozo' was coaling in Aden harbour.

CHAPTER II.

THE EAST AFRICAN NORTHERN SLAVE TRADE.

AFTER a delay, spent in a way I need not here particularise, the ship I was to command met me at Aden, and the very first official document placed in my hands, contained a clause directing the ship to 'cruise' in certain localities 'for the suppression of the slave trade.' This cruising was over when I joined, and there was only the passage from Aden to Bombay wanting to accomplish the remaining orders of the naval commander-in-chief. The voyage will be long and uneventful, and therefore the interval may be well occupied by setting out in a connected form in this chapter, the nature, objects, and issues of that trade in men which my orders remind me it will hereafter be my chief endeavour to suppress. A subsequent chapter I shall devote to setting forth the powers delegated to the naval officer for its suppression.

I well remember how, meeting once, years ago, a very celebrated and successful slave catcher, lately from the command of one of Her Majesty's ships in these waters, I was utterly astounded to learn that a traffic I supposed entirely restricted to the coast of

Africa and the new world, was in much more active progress between East Africa and the northern shores of the Indian Ocean. At that time books of East African travel were not; and popular knowledge of slave trading connected itself almost exclusively with the west coast of Africa. What went on in the east was neither understood nor thought of much importance. The waters of the Arabian Sea were under the management and dominion of the Indian Government; and being so, were left, as all things Indian are, to Indian views. The suppression of slave traffic was the child of British policy, and did not form a leading feature in that of our Indian empire. There was trouble enough already in managing so vast a continent, and an outside question, such as the slave trade, was left to take care of itself.

Now, however, Livingstone, Baker, Burton, Speke and Grant—and still more, recent transactions and writings—have familiarised the public mind with the idea of an extensive and flourishing man trade in Eastern Africa; and the methods of dealing with it at sea have passed from Indian into Imperial hands. But, judging from my own experience, there is still only a very vague notion of the nature, objects, and issues of the traffic. Its history must be gathered from stray passages in voluminous books of travel; in still more voluminous blue books, or in the reports of commissions. Of the sea traffic, the naval officer—after his manner—has written officially, but not for the public; and from him alone can such information come.

It is said, perhaps without much exaggeration, that the whole of the negro population of Eastern Africa are liable to capture and sale; and these regions form a preserve which is worked by the Arab in the slaving season, as you might work a moor after the 12th of August. The exceptions—omitting Egyptian territory—are the Somali tribes, who inhabit the country about Cape Guardafui, and dominate the coast line much farther south, who are not lawfully held in bondage by Mahommedans; and the few of mixed races who live under the protection of the Portuguese flag. The remaining population are at the mercy of the Arab or negro sportsman, and sell themselves, are shot down, netted, decoyed, speared, bought, or kidnapped, without the intervention of any game laws or regulations for the preservation of the breed.

The sea trade is twofold: from Northern Central Africa to Southern Asia, and from Southern Central Africa to Madagascar. It will be time enough to speak of the latter when we reach southern waters. I propose in this and the following chapter to consider the northern trade only.

Zanzibar, the capital of the Arab kingdom south of the Line, the centre of trade in Eastern Africa, is the reservoir into which the trickling streams of black blood from the interior flow and are gathered, pending the opening of the sluices which permit its outlet to seaward. From 10,000 to 20,000 slaves are annually passed through Zanzibar territory, who find their final domicile in the dominions of the Sultan; on the shores, or in the interior of Arabia

and Persia; or get a temporary resting-place on the decks of some British man-of-war, to be ultimately herded together at the Seychelles, at Bombay, or at Aden—sometimes as great a trouble to the authorities of those settlements, as ever their brethren in colour have proved to our transatlantic neighbours.

The winds and currents in the balanced ebb and flow which characterises their motions in the Indian Ocean, are the great regulators of native traffic, and of the slave season. The science of navigation, which permits the western merchant to despatch his wares at all seasons to all ports, and enables the mariner to dash boldly out where there is neither path nor trail, has not yet greatly invaded the unchanging east. The Arab feels safest within sight of land, and seldom dares to accept what we seek for 'plenty of sea room.' Thus he can only make his way at sea when there is such wind and current as shall carry his vessel in the roundabout direction involved in a coasting voyage.

The monsoons are consequently responsible for the Arab slave trade, and without them it must cease, as, in their absence it could probably never have arisen.

From October till April, the wind and current sweep across from the coast of India, and along the southern shores of Arabia: meeting the calms of the Gulf of Aden, they cross to Cape Guardafui, and so along the whole coast of Africa, till they break and turn against the counter winds and counter currents of the southern hemisphere, somewhere near the equator. This is, in point of fact, a process of interchanging water and air which is necessary to keep them fresh, and which at

this time is going on all round the northern tropic, wherever there is wind to blow or water to run. It is called in the Indian Ocean, the north-east monsoon, but it is really but the north-east trade wind, which is permitted to blow for these months only. The air in the Arabian sea is then at its coolest; little or no rain falls and strong winds are rare. From April till October all this process is reversed. A great and unnatural emptiness occurs in southern Asia, as the vertical sun dries it up. It has an immense appetite for air, and begins to suck it in. The south-east trade wind about Madagascar, finds the pressure which has hitherto kept it from spreading, becoming weaker. It pushes across its old boundaries and joins with its former opponent; then both together go northwards, hustling and struggling, sometimes with much commotion, and occasional thunder, lightning, and rain.

But whereas the trade wind of the southern hemisphere originally blew from the south-east towards the north-west, it now, reaching the mainland of Africa, is turned by it, and pursues a course from the south-west to the north-eastward running up the African coast, along the shores of Arabia, and so across to India. At or about the same time, the current which had been running down the Arabian and African coasts, all through the north-east monsoon, turns and runs back again over the old ground.

Thus it may be seen that there is every convenience for trading vessels to run down to Zanzibar, from Arabia, the Persian Gulf, and India at any time after October up to April, and to return thence any time

between April and September, with the certainty of making quick and convenient coasting voyages. Practically, however, the up and down journeys are confined to a very small number of months in the year, and of course, to but one journey each way annually. The change of monsoon only operates suddenly and completely in certain localities, and not simultaneously over the ocean. Passages, therefore, to be speedy, must not be undertaken until the monsoon has well set in, so that the wind and current may be depended on for certain. The north-east monsoon is a quiet, well disposed wind over the ocean west of India, and vessels from Arabia to Zanzibar may make use of it as soon as it has set in, and continue to run every day until it begins to break up. Traders from Bombay, Muscat, and the Persian Gulf, and slave traders from the latter places, begin to run about the middle of November, and continually flock into Zanzibar harbour from the middle of December in increasing numbers for a month.

The south-west monsoon is a blusterer, and specially violent in his middle age. The worst weather in the whole Arabian sea is to be found from the end of June till the end of August, in the little corner formed by the chain of islands terminated by Socotra, and the African coast. Arab vessels—wonderful in many ways—are not calculated for battling with a wind and sea, which even tries Her Majesty's ships. This little corner of bad weather lies immediately in their track, and can only be avoided by not putting to sea at that season. It therefore follows that the up-trade from Zanzibar must

take place as soon after the beginning and as near the end of the south-west monsoon as the wind will allow. It is believed that it altogether ceases in the middle of that season.

There is, however, a special consideration respecting the slave trade, which does not apply to the legitimate traffic, and which I think, confines it within still narrower limits as to time. The unfortunate article of commerce in question is perishable. An early market is probably not so important for the trader, as the landing of his cargo in good condition. A tedious voyage, involved in a very early or very late start from Zanzibar, would either land the slaves in Arabia in very bad condition, and possibly in reduced numbers, or would necessitate extra precautions in preparing the store of food and water. On the other hand, a voyage undertaken on the very verge of the height of the monsoon, if safe, is sure to be speedy. The date of arrival at market will, for the ante-monsoon voyage, not be greatly in arrear of that achieved by a very much earlier start from Zanzibar. For the post-monsoon voyage, the earlier it is undertaken the speedier it will be, and the earlier will be the arrival at market. I shall have occasion in a later chapter, to sum up the arguments in favour of this view. It is sufficient here to point out that probably the illicit traffic is greatest at the close of the ante-monsoon legitimate commerce, and before the opening of the post-monsoon ordinary trade.

How the black goods come first into the hands of the merchants in mid Africa has been narrated in many books of travel, but personal histories of cast

African slaves as detailed by themselves, have not often passed through the printing-press. I make no apology therefore, for the insertion here of statements[1] made by several slaves captured off the Arabian coast by one of Her Majesty's ships in the year 1869.

1. Male slave, name 'Frejala,' belonging to 'Wahiyou' tribe, age, about twenty years. Was sold by his father to Arab traders in Uhiyou, and brought by them to Kilwa, where he was sold to an Arab. Lived at Kilwa three years; was again sold, and sent to Zanzibar, where he lived for one year; was again sold and shipped for Muscat. He states that the journey from his country to Kilwa occupied one month, and that many slaves came down with him. He was shipped on board the dhow at Zanzibar in the day-time.

The dhow had been one month from Zanzibar when she was driven on shore by the man-of-war. She touched at Brava, remaining there three days shipping slaves (six Wardai Gallas) and water. She had been twenty days from Zanzibar to Brava, nine from Brava to Ras Madraka, where she was destroyed. Ten slaves died on the passage. When the dhow ran on shore they had been three days without water.

2. Male slave; name, 'Hamis;' Wyassa tribe; age, about twenty years. Was taken prisoner in fight between Wyassa and Wahiyou, and brought to Uhiyou country; he was sold to an Arab, and brought down to Kilwa, remaining two days; he was then brought to Zanzibar, where he lived for one month, and was sold

[1] Collected and kindly furnished to me by Lieutenant W. Henn, lately on the Livingstone searching expedition.

and shipped for Muscat. States that the dhow was twenty days from Zanzibar to Brava, remained five days at Brava, and was six days from Brava to Ras Madraka. The Arab crew of the dhow threatened to kill the slaves if they did not run inland as soon as the dhow touched the shore. Had been three days without water when captured. Several slaves had died since leaving Brava.

3. Male slave; name, 'Baraka;' tribe, Wahiyou; age, twenty-five years. Was captured in fight between Wahiyou and Wagindo. Sold to Arabs, and taken to Kilwa. From thence he was sent to Zanzibar and sold. He lived at Zanzibar two years, when he was again sold, and shipped for Muscat. Had been a month in the dhow, with no water for the last three days.

4. (This and the following statements were taken from slaves captured some days later than the foregoing). Female slave; name, 'Sarhea;' tribe, Wanyamuezi; age, about eighteen. Was stolen by Arabs whilst going to Unyamyembe; brought to Bagamoyo and from thence to Zanzibar. Remained at Zanzibar five months; was then sold and shipped for Muscat. From Unyamuezi to the coast the journey occupied three months. Was shipped by night on board the dhow at Zanzibar.

5. Male slave; name, 'Marazuku;' tribe, Wyassa; age, about twenty-five. Was stolen whilst asleep in his village near lake Nyassa by Arabs, and taken to Kilwa, where he remained two months: was then sent to Zanzibar, where he remained four months, and was finally sold and shipped for Muscat. Had a sister at

Zanzibar who had been sold to the Arabs by her father. Saw white men in a small steamer on Lake Nyassa about ten years ago.[1] The journey from Nyassa to Kilwa occupied a month and a half. Many slaves were brought down with him. He was shipped by night at Zanzibar.

6. Female slave; name, 'Salama;' tribe, Wagindo; age, about twenty. Father was killed in fight with Wahiyou. House burned and many men killed. Her sister and herself were captured and sold to Arabs. Took a month to reach Kilwa. Was sent to Zanzibar and there sold and shipped at night on board the dhow.

7. Male slave; name, 'Issindo;' tribe, 'Ovgooa;' age, twenty-five. Was originally taken in fight, and sold to Arabs. Lived in Zanzibar three years. Was stolen from his master there at night-time and taken on board the dhow.

Statements such as these, sadly simple in their uniformity, give a fair outline of the possibilities of negro life. Were it not that the senses of the hapless creatures are dulled to the misery of their lot, and feel little or none of that burning sense of injustice which would, under much milder provocation, drive the white man to desperation, East African slavery would long since have perished by its own hand. As it is, negro slavery is the result of the negro character, and I believe that a negro slave trade will in some form exist in the world so long as the

[1] This may either have been the 'Pioneer' or 'Lady Nyassa' on the Shire, or the travellers' boat on the lake itself.

negro character remains unchanged, and free to develop consequences.

As will have been noticed from the quoted state-[redacted]slave caravans from the interior converge upon Kilwa, or Quiloa, as it was formerly spelt. Zanzibar is not usually more than two or three days' voyage from Kilwa, but such is the careless dislike of the Arab to provide for contingencies, that it is believed this sea voyage is for the unfortunate slave a worse trial than his much longer land journey.[1] The vessels conveying them are small and badly found. Food and water are shipped only in sufficient quantities for supply during the shortest possible voyage.[2] A little foul wind or calm will cause the slaves to be landed at Zanzibar in the horrible state with which English residents there are too familiar, and which I have seen myself in the slave market at Zanzibar. The freight from Kilwa to Zanzibar for an adult slave is six or eight shillings in value, and the cargoes number 147 on an average. In the year ending August 1869, the cargoes of slaves landed at Zanzibar were eighty-one in number, and as estimated, amounted in the aggregate to 11,944; besides these, there were exported to Lamoo and Pemba, direct from Kilwa, about 3,000 slaves, so that the total export for this year was about 15,000

[1] Dr. Steere says: 'It is not customary to give any food on the voyage, except a little uncooked rice.' 'As regards the passage by sea, even between Kilwa and Zanzibar, there was a dhow very lately lost a third of the slaves on board; there were ninety thrown overboard either dead or dying, between Kilwa and Zanzibar.' Rep. Parl. Com. 1871, p. 71.

[2] The short voyage to Brava is as bad. See Capt. Tucker in Parl. Papers, Class B. 1872.

head: but what the total harvest originally gathered by the Arab traders came to, will never be known. All we do know is that certainly many died by the way.[1]

I have spoken of a 'slaving season' in Eastern Africa and this expression is literally correct. Naturally such a season would correspond with the monsoons, but the late Sultan of Zanzibar, Syud Majid, in deference to our wishes has artificially regulated it. Slaves are not allowed to pass by water within the Sultan's dominions between January 1, and May 1, in each year. There is, therefore, a close season of four months, but during the remaining eight, the trade flows apace.

The Sultan of Zanzibar's dominions comprise the coast-line of Africa and adjacent islands from about 10° to about 2° south latitude. He claims a suzerainty over Juba, Brava, and towns still farther north, but the claim is seldom allowed. Anything so definite as a boundary-line to his territory would correspond so little with the character of an Arab chief, that we shall never, in the course of our progress, meet with one.

For the use of his subjects, the transport of slaves from the interior of Africa to the coast-line is at all seasons legal by Zanzibar law. Their transport by

[1] See Dr. Steere, Parl. Com. 1872, p. 71, &c. Rev. H. Waller, p. 65, *et seq.* The latter says, describing the transmission of slaves to the coast: 'It is like sending up for a large block of ice to London in the hot weather; you know that a certain amount will melt away before it reaches you in the country, as it travels down; but that which remains will be quite sufficient for your wants.' 'I have no reason to doubt that four or five lives are lost for every slave delivered safe at Zanzibar.' See, however, chapter xxiii. where the question is examined.

sea from any one port of his dominions to any other is illegal between the dates before-mentioned, namely, January 1, and May 1, in each year. The carriage of slaves for sale, by water, is illegal for the subjects of the Sultan of Zanzibar, or of Omān (Muscat), at all seasons south of the ninth degree of south latitude, and north about the second degree of south latitude.

There is, therefore, a legal and an illegal slave trade by sea for the subjects of these princes. It is illegal everywhere in the close season: it is illegal outside certain limits in the open season. Slave trading by land is smuggling at no time and in no place within the territories of Zanzibar or Omān.

Although Kilwa remains the chief port of export, and Zanzibar the chief port of import for the slaves, some trade goes on at other places, and never passes through the Zanzibar custom house. Various small assortments of the chattel reach many small ports on the African coast, and are then shipped for the north. The presence of an English man-of-war in the close season sometimes makes that part of the smuggling business which consists in shipping the slaves on board the northern vessels extremely difficult. They are then marched by land in a body along the coast, or carried in small boats and in small numbers by sea, to the port of Juba or Brava or further north. The northern vessel which is to pick them up there, sails from Zanzibar ostensibly as an innocent merchant vessel—a sort of Oriental Alabama—and does not take on board that which makes her liable to seizure until she is,

as she hopes, out of harm's way.[1] Again, during the open season, slaves which have passed through the customs, and paid their duty of four dollars a head to the Sultan's treasury at Kilwa, go direct by sea to Lamoo, one of the most northern of the Sultan's ports on the coast, from or to which slaves can be legally shipped, and there await shipment to the northward when the wind and the absence of a British cruiser permits. Other slaves who have gone to Zanzibar from Kilwa, and paid two dollars duty there, are sold in the market, pay another two dollars to the customs, and are exported to northern ports during the open season ready for the northern voyage as before. But by far the greater number of those who pass by sea beyond the legal boundary of about 2° south latitude, are shipped direct from Zanzibar. If, in the close season, a man-of-war should be in the neighbourhood, they are smuggled off by night, and do not pay duty: if in the open season, whether in presence of a man-of-war or not, they are shipped openly by day, and regularly, through the custom house.[2]

[1] 'A craft really engaged in the Slave trade stands a better chance of escaping when she is simply watched as far as the line, to which point she can dodge in and out along the coast of a slave preserve, than she would stand if, after crossing the line she would have to run the gauntlet of a division cruising along the coast of Asia in waters where there could be no question that every craft found with slaves on board was a lawful prize.' Col. Lewis Pelly. Parl. Paper; Class B, Slave Trade 1867, p. 131.

[2] Shipments from Zanzibar, ostensibly for Lamoo, &c., in 1868:—

SOUTH-WEST MONSOON.			NORTH-EAST MONSOON.	
May	2,035		Oct.	1,657
June	537	Strength of Monsoon.	Nov.	534
July	722		Dec.	232
Aug.	1,407			
Sept.	1,091			

It is officially stated that the annual export of slaves from Kilwa to Zanzibar is 12,000, and from Kilwa to other ports within the legal limits about 3,000. The duty levied at Kilwa would therefore come to about 7,200*l.* per annum.[1] Perhaps 3,300*l.* per annum is levied in the Zanzibar custom house on the export of those slaves who have already paid duty at Kilwa.[2]

The vessels which conduct the slave trade and all other trade between Omān and Zanzibar, are of different sizes, and of two patterns. In the navy both are always called 'dhows.' In common language in India, and in Indian official documents, both are as often called 'buglas' or 'buggalows.' The smallest of these dhows or buglas are mere boats: the largest I have ever seen, did not appear to be over 350 tons burthen.[3]

If a pear be sharpened at the thin end, and then cut in half longitudinally, two models will have been made resembling in all essential respects the ordinary slave dhow. From their form, it is evident the bow must sink deeply in the water, whilst the stern floats lightly upon it. In this they differ from the universal practice of European ship-building, but it has yet to be proved that they are in principle, wrongly constructed.

They are seldom wholly decked, and by far the greater number are not decked at all. Cross-beams at

[1] At $5 to the £.

[2] In Syud Majid's time it was said nearly the whole of the sums realised by the duty on slaves was paid over to keep the northern slave trading Arabs quiet at Zanzibar.

[3] For detailed notices of the dhow or buggalow, and the battel, or bedan, see Burton's *Zanzibar*, and Steere's *Handbook to the Swahili Language*. In the text, I give a description applicable to both.

intervals, strengthen the structure and preserve its shape; and over these, strips of bamboo in a sort of Venetian blind arrangement, afford a footing for the crew, and represent the solid planking of more elaborate specimens of naval architecture. Commonly, especially in the larger class of dhows, a light superstructure occasionally of great size forming a poop, is added at the stern, and serves as a dwelling for the captain or owner, perhaps for his wives, family, and personal attendants, the upper class of passengers, if he has any, and sometimes for the whole crew.

The dhows often carry no more than one mast: this is a heavy rough spar, tapered somewhat towards its head, and generally leaning considerably towards the bow of the vessel. This, again, is in opposition to western notions, the masts of our vessels and boats invariably 'raking,' as it is called, towards the stern. If there is a second mast it is a smaller copy—usually a much smaller copy—of the other, and is placed near the stern.

The sails of these vessels are neither the complete 'lateen,' or triangular sail, of the Mediterranean and India; nor the 'lug' sail of the English Channel, but they partake of the nature of both. Their substance is strong soft cotton canvas, of a glittering whiteness, which causes them to shine like a star when first seen above the distant horizon with the sun's rays upon them. In shape the sail is a right angled triangle with a parallelogram below its base. The hypothenuse is fastened to a very long yard, not unlike a gigantic fishing-rod with its butt somewhat tapered.

The point of the sail goes to the point of the yard, and the hypothenuse of the triangle is laced to the latter throughout its length, so that the sail gradually widens until at its base or foot it might extend over two-thirds of the length of the vessel carrying it. The yard is attached to halyards, at what would be the first joint were it a veritable fishing-rod, and is hoisted, when the sail is set, close to the head of the mast. When strong tackle is applied to the lower, or thick end of the yard, so as to balance the weight of the long pointed prolongation, and the sheet is fastened to the lower after corner of the sail, the dhow is ready for the breeze.

The spread of canvas in the dhow's sail[1] appears to us excessive for her size, and there is no arrangement for reefing in bad weather: but every sea-going dhow carries two yards and two sails, one large, as described, for daylight and fine weather, the other small, for night and foul weather. This, so far as I have seen, is the solitary recognition by the Arab of the contingencies incident to a sea voyage.

These vessels do not 'tack,' as European vessels of nearly all types are prepared to do. They invariably 'wear' when beating to windward, and the simple process is to put the helm up, take the corner of the sail (the sheet) round before the yard and bring it aft again on the other side. Their peculiar build—similar in this to the Bombay native craft—so eminently fits them for this evolution, that it becomes a quicker and more successful method of changing the

[1] Burton calls it 'A preposterous sail.'

tack than our apparently more reasonable plan. The deepest part of the dhow being under the foremast, it forms a pivot on which the vessel readily turns. The heaviest part of the ship, the stern, while it is that which is shallowest, easily skims over the surface of the water, and forming, in the process a sort of fly wheel round the deep pivoted stem, it rapidly obeys the impulse of the helm.

These vessels are enormously swift: they would tax the powers of our fastest yachts in light winds: the most speedy man-of-war, under steam and sail, has her hands full when she gives chase to them in a breeze. I have doubted of success, when rushing after them at ten and a half miles an hour. I have missed my quarry when I had not immediate means to go more than ten miles in the hour.

No eastern Mr. Froude has been at hand to investigate the theory on which the lines of the dhow should be drawn. No eastern Mr. Reed has put the theory into practice on their behalf—they tumble about furiously in a sea-way, and shake the very soul out of any European who commits himself to their tender mercies. But the Arab, the negro, or the cross between them, show as little concern for the fantastic boundings of the beams on which they balance themselves, as they do for any other minor trouble, such as want of food or water, which too commonly exist in the dhow.

All the fittings of these vessels are of the rudest sort. Nothing seems to be finished, and every part of the work looks as though the workmen had been

called away in a hurry from it. The woodwork is either bare, or smeared with an oil whose composition I am unaware of, but whose stench is like nothing earthly.[1] The ballast is usually sand and shingle; and cargo, ballast, food, and raiment form a conglomerate at the bottom of the vessel not unlike the débris of a dust heap.

The dhow is generally leaky. I have never heard an estimate of the numbers which go down at sea, but if a very large proportion of those which sail on it do not sink, their general proximity to the shore, and not the tightness of the hull must save them.[2] To tow them at any speed would generally pull them to pieces, as I have seen some young gentlemen operate on their sister's dolls: to attempt their repair would resemble the labours of the constable to apprehend Mr. Punch in the popular drama. The ropes in use are the usual rough coir, made from cocoa-nut fibre; the anchor is of the primitive form, and consists of a shank with several hooks radiating from its extremity.

Every dhow I have seen, whether a lawful or an unlawful trader, carries arms. Seldom, or never, cannon, but invariably muskets, swords, spears and shields. Commonly, the musket is the long, small stocked weapon with which we are so familiar as the typical eastern firelock; but, especially in dhows fresh

[1] Shark oil (?)

[2] Burton speaks differently: 'The bottom of the kidau, or small dhow is paid over with a composition of lime and shark's oil, which, hardening under water, preserves the hull from sea worms. Thus sheathed ships which have made two feet of leakage become tight as if newly coppered.' *Zanzibar*, vol. i. p. 75.

from Zanzibar, the weapon made at Birmingham or Liège, on purpose for export, very often predominates. New double-barrelled fowling-pieces are sometimes found on board in considerable numbers. The muskets are always loaded with charges so enormous that it is dangerous to fire them. The sword is an unhandy, badly balanced weapon, double-edged and rounded at the point, with a long handle, guiltless of any guard. The shield would never be taken for one by the uninitiated. It is made of the yellow skin of some pachydermatous animal,[1] its form is that of a steeple crowned hat. To employ it in battle, the Arab takes it in his left hand, by a cross bar where the strings would be if it were a hat. The spear is simply a lance-head mounted on a light cane.

Provisions in these vessels are carried, as I have already hinted, in no particular place. They consist of rice, dates, a grain known locally as 'M'tama,'[2] which seems a staple food of the slaves, dried fish—shark, I believe, having the preference—cocoa-nuts, and such other fruits as fortune may offer, with coffee as the beverage. Water is carried in large square wooden tanks, commonly two or three, holding perhaps 100 to 150 gallons. The Arab being by local circumstances an economist of water, uses very little; nor is the negro, so far as I can judge, a consumer of liquid to the same extent as the European. But even this little is not unfrequently denied both to the slave and his owner at sea. The water tanks are commonly as leaky as the ships, and while one lets in the salt water,

[1] 'Boiled hippopotamus hide.'—Burton.

[2] Sessamum (?)

the other lets out the fresh. No doubt the freemen in a slave dhow will suffer last, if a question of shortness of provisions or water arises; but that freemen and slaves all suffer together is a fact to be noted; and that Asiatic freemen who navigate the Indian seas in lawful callings, habitually suffer the pangs of hunger and thirst, no one who has been in company with their vessels out of sight of land in a calm, can doubt for a moment. More than once in calm weather, I have seen a black speck between me and a distant dhow develop on approach into a wretched crew of famished skeletons in a canoe, whose only hope of existence seemed to be the food and water they begged from us.

Except that they are more crowded, I have not perceived that the condition of the slave in transit across the Arabian Sea is very different from that of his master. The Englishman would, probably, succumb to the privations of the journey, but I have often heard it said on the spot, that no one should talk of the cruelty of the Arab to his slaves on the northern voyage, unless they were acquainted with the conditions under which he and his family performed the voyage of business or pleasure from Arabia to Zanzibar.[1]

[1] In expressing an opinion, which may excite controversy, I quote the following official statement by the Resident in the Persian Gulf, so far back as 1844:—

'The treatment of the African slaves is at no time either severe or cruel. During the sea voyage they are not bound, or kept under particular restraint. Rice, dates, and fish, in sufficient quantities form their food, and a coarse cloth round the middle of the body constitutes their only clothing.'

But, on the other hand, this crowding in so small a space is a crying evil. I shall elsewhere have occasion to point out that we must not suppose crowding by itself affects the negro, as it does a European, or indeed an Asiatic. We shall meet with at least one cargo of slaves, plump, well favoured, and not unhappy, with the worst of their journey to Arabia over. But if disease, want, and crowding come together, then, God help the wretched items in that crowd! Yet again I have to say that I could not choose off hand whether I would rather spend a fortnight in the condition of a slave in an Arab dhow not over crowded, nor under-provisioned and watered, or in the condition of a peasant in some cabins I have seen in the south of Ireland, whose masters were said to possess a considerable balance at their bankers. I regard both conditions with inexpressible disgust, but if I am to analyse the nature of my sensations, I cannot help noticing that I would rather share a plank with an Irish peasant than with a negro slave, and that therefore, if my disgust be equal, I must regard the condition of the slave in his dhow as better than that of the peasant in his cabin.

I am not speaking now of the liabilities of that episode in negro life, comprised in the sea passage to Asia. I speak of what I have seen, and judge to be the average condition of things; and I want to draw in the reader's mind a distinction between that horror with which we are all so familiar in thought—the passage of the slave across the Atlantic, and the passage of his fellow across the sea of Arabia.

Between the two trades there are many differences. Ships for the Atlantic trade are—or were—large well found vessels, specially fitted with slave carrying appliances, extra water tanks, extra cooking places, special decks for slaves, and other things unknown in the Arabian Sea.

Such preparations display a forethought quite foreign to Arab character; and his slave carrying vessels are fitted just as any other—that is, not fitted at all. I believe the substantial truth to be, that many Arab merchants ship a cargo of slaves at Zanzibar, indifferently with any other merchandise. I have no reason to doubt that a good offer will tempt any Arab to risk a slave cargo. The Arab has no notion, and can form no conception of our sentiments regarding slavery. Though he frees so many slaves as a thank-offering for Allah's mercies to him, it is entirely a voluntary business with him. There is no more moral pressure put upon him to abjure slavery than there is on a Christian to build a church. It is, however, I believe, true that the Arab gentleman considers slave trading a low business, and he would not personally engage in it. But then, he also considers commerce of all sorts as tinged with lowness, and as one of those necessary evils to be touched only with the tongs.[1]

If the slave transported across the Atlantic suffered horrors, they were deliberately inflicted on him by the avarice and cruelty of the European or Ameri-

[1] I cannot quite understand Burton's statement (*Zanzib.* vol. i. p. 376) that the Arab noble is *essentially* a merchant. It disagrees with much I heard of him. Yet I also know of cases where the mercantile spirit was strong.

can trader. If the slave crossing the Indian Ocean suffers, it is from his master's want of forethought, and his master may suffer with him.

Perhaps the grand difference between the two passages and the two trades may be best indicated and summed up by the statement that in the west coast trade slave irons and means of coercion were an usual and unerring test to distinguish the illegal from the legal trader, and that it is understood of the east coast trade that some naval officer once met with a pair of slave irons in an Arab dhow.

The East African is often transported by sea at great speed, and generally in fine weather. Except in rare cases, he spends his days and nights more or less in the open air; but so does the European who seeks comfort in those seas. As to the speed,[1] the distance from Zanzibar to Ras el Hadd, the eastern promontory of Arabia, which may be looked on as the practical termination of the voyage, is roughly 2,400 miles. A dhow sailing from Zanzibar when the south-west monsoon has well set in—about the first week in May—will perform the voyage in seventeen or eighteen days, or at the rate of 130 to 140 miles a day. But if the voyage be counted from Lamoo or thereabouts, the speed will be much greater. Below that point the winds and currents are not so certainly favourable as they are above it. A favourable current of fifty miles a day may be fairly calculated on throughout the rest of the journey, and there are instances recorded of as

[1] 'The badan from Sur being able to make eleven knots an hour, is preferred by passengers.' *Zanzibar*, vol. i. p. 74.

much as ninety miles current in twenty-four hours on the coast above Brava. With such winds as then blow, a progress of seven or eight miles an hour, making a total of 220 to 240 miles a day, may be expected, and thus the whole run would take up only eight or nine days. If the start be made in the close season from Zanzibar—say about the first week in April—the winds and currents are not so settled, and the passage is much slower. It is not unimportant to remember that in consequence of this fact the slave who pays duty, swells the revenue, and passes from Zanzibar harbour a duly licensed and taxed chattel, is likely to suffer infinitely less than the smuggled article, who is huddled on board ship in the close season in the secrecy of night, and is off before morning breaks to disclose the transaction.

One advantage of the coasting voyage is the facility it affords for watering when the supply runs short. There are several places along the African coast, among the islands between Socotra and the mainland, on the Arabian coast, and amongst the Kooria Mooria Islands, where traders, legal and illegal, put in for water. If the Arab did not run it so very close, the sufferings of the slaves from thirst need not be severe or frequent.

I have thus endeavoured to give a somewhat connected account of the conditions under which this terrible business is carried on; before I conclude the description, I must note that recently—since the first part of this chapter was written—a belief, not founded on fact which I can discover, has sprung up in slave-catching circles that the Arab slave trader has begun to

doubt the wisdom and safety of his inshore voyage to the north. Her Majesty's ships have wrought such destruction on his speculative trade at Brava, Markha, Magadoxo, and Ras Haffoon, to say nothing of the various Rasses or Capes along the Arabian coast, that it is said he has in some cases braved the dangers of the open sea and has struck out directly from Zanzibar, and then hauled up for Ras el Hadd. Let us hope for the sake of the honest gentleman that that route may turn out as unsatisfactory as the former.

It is now time to turn to a consideration of the amount of black ware which goes to the northern markets, and where those markets lie.

We may assume that 15,000 head of slaves are exported annually from Kilwa, and if we supposed that 2,000 more issued from other ports, we should probably be within the mark. If all went beyond the dominions of the Sultan of Zanzibar, we should have the complete facts of the trade before us. A certain proportion, however, never leave the Sultan's territories, but remain in the islands of Zanzibar, or Pemba, or go to Mombas or Lamoo. The number so disposed of is variously estimated. Perhaps, as Dr. Kirk considers the requirements for the island and town of Zanzibar are about 1,700 yearly, this estimate might be doubled for the whole of the Sultan's dominions. In such a case, the latest and most trustworthy information gives a northern slave trade involving the fortunes of some 13,000 slaves yearly.

It is difficult to say whether this estimate is under or over the truth. It is based entirely on the *probable*

export from Africa, and I am not aware of any satisfactory figures capable of checking it by a reference to the import into Asia. Then the very figures of the Zanzibar and Kilwa custom houses are doubted. The revenue being farmed, it is the interest of the farmers always to show to enquirers a smaller amount of traffic than actually takes place, and it might, therefore, be supposed that the return admitted by the custom house authorities respecting slaves, if not correct, must be under the mark. It is argued on the other hand that the custom house people—British subjects—know that they are dealing with a doomed trade in slaves, and that it will be to their interest to exaggerate that item of revenue now, in view of a rearrangement with the Sultan's government when it shall be withdrawn.

An argument made use of by very excellent authorities to diminish the estimate of the northern traffic consists in drawing attention to the very small numbers intercepted by Her Majesty's cruisers. It has been pointed out that in the year 1869, 400 vessels, mostly engaged in the trade from Zanzibar to the north, were boarded and searched by the cruisers stationed to intercept them; eleven slavers only were detected, and about 1,000 slaves were rescued. If only about three per cent of the ships trading to Zanzibar carry 1,000 slaves between them, there must be, to represent a slave trade of 10,000 head, 4,000 vessels leaving Zanzibar at the beginning of the monsoon. Residents at Zanzibar would deny that anything like that number do leave.

But some correction must be applied to these figures.

It is not known how many of these 400 sail have been counted twice in the estimate. They passed through the hands of successive men-of-war, and some must have been twice entered. In the particular year in question, necessity compelled every ship to forsake her station before the end of May, and what went on afterwards is not known.

Another argument to lower the estimate, is the actual tonnage necessary to transport so large a number of persons. Say again that 10,000 were to be provided for, the tonnage would be enormous, much greater than residents at Zanzibar believe to arrive in the harbour.

It is, however, a simple fact that a dhow from 80 to 100 tons will carry 100 to 150 slaves to Ras el Hadd. And as many as 420 slaves have been taken in two vessels measuring in the aggregate but 340 tons; 100 dhows, of 100 tons each, would therefore carry up 10,000 slaves at a low estimate for each dhow: fifty would carry them up at a high estimate. It is not at all impossible that 50 to 100 dhows should be engaged in this traffic.

And, summing up the whole matter, Dr. Kirk says, that his figures from the custom houses may be thoroughly trusted. Those who know him will not credit his making a statement without a due weighing of possibilities.

When we pass from the export to the import of slaves, our ground becomes less sure. We have the fullest information relative to the market of purchase. We can trace the unfortunate 'desirability' from his first

acquirement in the lake district of Africa to the port of export, through the general market, all along the coasts of Africa and Arabia to the vicinity of Ras-el-Hadd; but there we lose him. How it is we know so little of his destination, I have never been quite able to comprehend. We, however, find him after his final sale, as a pearl diver in the shallows of the green waters of Omān: as the familiar dependent and domestic of the Arab gentleman: as the servant of the Persian merchant. 'They go even up to Bussorah and Mohamrah, and from thence I have no doubt some find their way into Turkish harems.'[1] It does not seem to be quite known, or, if known, it is not published, where the central depôt for the receipt of slaves lies, or if there be a central depôt anywhere on the shores of the Persian Gulf. A late Resident at Muscat was under the impression that about 4,000, of the 13,000 who pass up, were landed either at Ras-el-Hadd, or at the port of Sur adjacent. It will be found stated in the last Parliamentary report, that a public slave market exists at Muscat itself. If this be so, it is well concealed, for I have not myself seen or heard of it, nor was it mentioned to me on the spot that such a thing existed. On the other hand, if we refer back some years, we shall find it stated on excellent authority that in the year 1841, in the months of August, September, and October, 117 vessels, carrying 1,217 slaves, touched at the Island of Karrack, near the head of the Persian Gulf. In the year 1844, it was further supposed that about 3,500 new slaves were sold annu-

[1] Hon. C. Vivian. Rep. Parl. Com. 1871, p. 3.

ally at the head of the Gulf, in Persia, and at a few of the smaller Arabian towns on the southern shore. Let us lift the curtain, as we are only able to do slightly, from another great slave-consuming centre.

Mr. Palgrave made us all familiar with the centre of power in Arabia, the capital of the Wahabees, Nejd. Colonel Pelly, the Resident in the Persian Gulf, performed, in the year 1865, a journey thither in the ordinary course of his duty, and has related officially what he did and saw, with a simplicity and brevity which does not detract from the interest of his account, and by no means hides the gallantry of the achievement.

The special danger he ran there was due to the feeling excited at Nejd by the English anti-slavery policy. Colonel Pelly relates that 'the secretary (to Feysul, the Sultan and Imaum of the Wahabees) then went to the Imaum, but twice returned again during the evening. His manner was now entirely changed: becoming abrupt, and almost hostile. He reverted to the proceedings of my predecessor in regard to the seizure of Wahabee craft; and then launched out again concerning our anti-slavery proceedings. He spoke of us as successful pirates; but laughed at the notion of our philanthropy.'[1] It cannot be interference with a small trade—a few hundreds annually—which rouses the Wahabee Government. At least a considerable number of slaves must find their way to Riyadh.

It was stated—also in 1844,[2]—that a season existed

[1] Report of a journey to the Wahabee capital of Riyadh. By Col. Lewis Pelly. Bombay, 1866.

[2] Bombay Government Records, vol. xxiv. 1856.

for the transport and sale of slaves in the Gulf itself, between the months of July and October, inclusive. Such a season would correspond with the up trade from Africa, but I am not unprepared to believe that as the winds in the Gulf are not materially regulated by season,[1] so neither is the trade in slaves, or more innocent commodities.

In 1865, Colonel Disbrowe made a journey from Muscat, overland to Ras-ul-Khymah, a town rather south of Cape Mussendom. At Musnaah on the coast, sixty miles from Muscat, he learnt that 500 slaves were yearly landed from Africa, but he could not believe it. At Murrayr, sixty miles further on, he learnt that 500 slaves had been landed in one year, and that 100 to 150 head of slaves was then the average import in Murrayr vessels. At Ghallut Kulbah, fifteen miles further on, some 50 or 60 was the annual importation.[2] The native agent at Muscat reported in 1866 to the Resident in the Persian Gulf, that it was said 300 or 400 slaves had arrived at Muscat that year. The season was August, September, and October. The British agent at Lingeh in the Persian Gulf reported in the same year, that slaves coming from Sur and Battinah (Arab ports) had been landed at Koong and Hassinah for the purpose of sale.[3]

Such are the stray pieces of information we get of the ports of import, from which we are to judge of the ultimate issues of this trade.

[1] From November to March, winds in the Gulf are alternately up and down. Remaining months' winds are mostly down the Gulf, but with land and sea breezes. Bombay Rec., p. 614.

[2] Parl. Pap. Slave Trade, Class B, 1867, p. 123.

[3] *Ibid.* pp. 128, 129.

In addition I may quote the following from the Records of the Residency at Bushire, dated 1844. 'Slaves imported into Persia through the southern ports are of two kinds—the African from the coast of Zanzibar, the territory principally of the Imaum of Muscat; and the Hubshee, or Abyssinian, from the shores of the Red Sea, Judda, Hodeida, Mocha, &c. Muscat and Sur are the principal ports to which slaves, from whencesoever shipped, whether Zanzibar or the Red Sea, are brought, and whence they are eventually carried into Turkey, Persia, Sind, the Arab states, and even our own territories on the western coast of India.[1] The boats conveying them make coasting voyages, selling individuals of their live cargo at the several ports at which they may touch. Of the above countries, Turkey consumes by far the greater proportion, Bussora and Bagdad being the largest marts.

'No vessels proceed direct to Zanzibar from any of the Persian ports, with the exception of Lingeh, whence three or four boats are annually despatched, each returning with about seventy slaves. The season for the Gulf traffic in slaves is between July 1 and November 1.

'At Bushire and the other Persian ports there are no particular spots alloted for slave markets, nor day fixed for the sale. On the arrival of a boat the owner takes the slaves, or a number of them, forming his cargo, to a hired dwelling, where they are sold privately; or to a caravanserai, where they are publicly exposed for sale. Should the market happen to be overstocked,

[1] It must be remembered this was 28 years ago.

or the owner find any obstacle to the expeditious disposal of his property, they are re-shipped, and conveyed to Mohumrah or Bussora, or even Bagdad, at either of which places they are pretty certain of finding a ready sale.'[1]

An expression in this report, relative to the export of Abyssinians from the Red Sea, brings us naturally to consider that locality in its slave-trading aspect.

That there is an export traffic from that sea, and from African ports just outside it, there can hardly, I think, be any doubt. Abyssinian slaves are still in demand in Arabia and Persia. Their price ranges high, and the demand is probably supplied.

A question remains as to whether the Straits of Mandeb witness an inward as well as an outward traffic in slaves. At first sight I should be tempted to say offhand that there was an outward traffic only; and for the following reasons:—When the wind blows down the coast of Africa, that is, in the north-east monsoon, it blows up through the south part of the Red Sea. When it blows up the coast of Africa, it blows down the Red Sea. It is difficult, therefore, to imagine how the trade can be carried on. The wind which will carry the slave cargo rapidly up to Cape Guardafui, will fail to take it rapidly up the Gulf of Aden, and will be dead foul for passing up the Red Sea. Hence it might be supposed that an inward traffic could not be carried out in the rude state of Arab navigation. But one or two expressions which I have met with in official documents lead me to doubt my reasoning.

[1] Bombay Records, vol. xxiv. 1856, p. 646.

The late Captain Pasley, writing from Zanzibar, in August 1867, says, 'I have just learnt that almost all the slaves of the Red Sea run from this coast during the north-east monsoon, and that the export of slaves from the Zanzibar territory is not confined to the period of the south-west monsoon, when the Red Sea dhows are unable to beat up the Gulf of Aden.'[1]

Again, on September 28, a native boat left Zanzibar for Macullah near Aden, and conveyed a letter from Mr. Churchill, which reached London on November 23.[2] The distance from Zanzibar to Macullah is 1,500 miles, and if she ran 120 miles per day, she would have reached her port October 10; at this date, she would meet no difficulty in proceeding up the Red Sea.

The first rough idea—generally adopted when I was on the East Indian station—that the traffic in slaves up the Red Sea was insignificant, does not seem to hold.

There can be no doubt about the demand. For ordinary purposes Abyssinian slaves are too expensive. The Red Sea coasts of Arabia must, equally with the Persian Gulf coasts, require to be supplied with a cheaper article; and, looking to the fact that the caravan route from Mecca lies through Riyadh to Persia, it is not impossible that it may be a slave route also.

On the whole, it may be admitted, there is no good reason to doubt General Rigby's dictum that, 'There

[1] Parl. Paper, Slave Trade, Class B, 1868, p. 115.
[2] *Ibid.*

is now a very considerable traffic in slaves from Zanzibar up the Red Sea.'[1]

We therefore have as ports of import for the Central African negro, viâ Zanzibar, the whole coast line of Asia from Suez to, say, Guadur, on the Beloochistan shore. The smallest numbers are probably disembarked between Bab-el-Mandeb and Ras-el-Hadd; a larger number in the Red Sea, and the largest of all beyond Ras-el-Hadd.

The next point to be considered in this general sketch of the East African slave trade, and by no means the least important, is the profit made upon the article. And here we shall meet with even more difficulty than we have had in tracing out the points of import. The price of slaves seems to be as capricious as that of horses. No doubt the unfortunates have 'points' known to the initiated, which raise or depress their value; but even the ordinary every-day working slave seems to bear an infinite variety of prices in the ideas of different witnesses. If we take Mr. Waller's evidence, to begin with, we find that the price of a negro only ten years old, is two yards of calico in Central Africa: say ten pence sterling.[2] By the time he reaches Kilwa, if we take the terrible estimate of four to one against his doing so at all,[3] his actual value will have risen to four shillings and two pence; perhaps the cost of his food for the month's journey will be two shillings, that of his fellows eight shillings, then

[1] Rep. Parl. Com. 1871, p. 51.

[2] The price of ten fowls or one goat in the same locality. See Rep. Central African Mission 1862.

[3] Rep. Com. on East African Slave Trade, 1870.

the export duty of two dollars, and the freight to Zanzibar, say four shillings, will bring him to market having cost the dealer, in money laid out, just 1*l.* 6*s.* 6*d.* Say seven dollars. Such a slave I have seen offered at twenty dollars in the Zanzibar market, while sixteen dollars has been refused for him. If we set down the charges for outfit, labour, &c., in collecting the slaves from the interior, at five dollars per head, the auctioneers in the market would be asking a profit of sixty-six per cent., and refusing a profit of thirty-three per cent.

There are, of course, several most important questions with regard to the price of slaves, and the profit derivable from them. Should the price rise to a prohibitive rate, the export trade will necessarily cease. Should the profit fall to a rate much below that of lawful commerce, the trade will equally fall to the ground. I have been at the pains to get together some utterly unsatisfactory figures for the ascertainment of these points.

First, as to the rise in price at Zanzibar. In 1844 it was officially supposed the price of boys ranged from seven to fifteen dollars up to ten years old: and from fifteen to thirty dollars at ten to twenty years old.[1]

Burton says (in 1856), 'A small boy fresh from the mainland commands (at Zanzibar) from seven to fifteen dollars. A girl under seven or eight years old, from ten to eighteen dollars.[2] Colonel Pelly, writing in 1863, speaks of slaves as costing 'from six to twelve dollars in

[1] Bombay Records, vol. xxiv., 1856, p. 649.
[2] Zanzibar, vol. i. p. 465.

East Africa.'[1] In another place he says, at the same date, 'The poorer sort cost two and a half dollars at Kilwa. A superior young female may be bought for about the equivalent of 1*l.* 10*s.*'[2] Dr. Christie, a resident at Zanzibar, writing in 1871, says, 'The average price of a slave for country work is twenty-five to thirty dollars.'[3]

If we are to put any faith in these various estimates, we shall not gather any very considerable rise in price at Zanzibar between 1844 and 1871, although the direct contrary is assumed by nearly every witness. Young boys ranged from seven to fifteen dollars in 1844, in 1856, and more than sixteen dollars was not offered in open market on a certain day in 1869.

Young girls went at from ten to eighteen dollars in 1856, from seven to eight dollars in 1863; and I saw one offered in the market myself for seventeen and a half, in 1869. Full-grown males range lower than boys for export, but higher for home use. In 1844 the price was stated at seventeen to twenty dollars, or thirty dollars if the slave were not more than twenty years old. In 1871 the maximum of dollars was not exceeded.

Turning now to prices in the Persian Gulf. The advance on Zanzibar prices was stated in 1844 to be twenty per cent. at Muscat, and fifty per cent. at Bushire or Bussora.[4]

Colonel Disbrowe in 1866 found the selling price of new slaves on the coast of Omān at one place to

[1] Parl. Papers, Class B, 1867, p. 123.
[2] Report to Government of Bombay, July 10, 1862.
[3] The East African Slave Trade. London: Harrison, 1871, p. 32.
[4] Bombay Records, p. 649.

range from ten dollars min. to forty dollars max.; young girls fetching highest.[1] At another place, prices ran from fifteen to thirty-five dollars.[2] In the same year at Muscat, the official estimate of price by the native agent was higher, being from forty to fifty, or even sixty dollars.[3]

If these figures prove anything, they show an increased profit in later years, and consequently a higher demand; but, looking at the variation in estimate the wrong way—that is, higher at Muscat than further up the coast—I should be disposed to say that, as to profits and prices, there is not a very distinctly marked difference between 1844 and the present date.

What is singular, however, is, that most of these witnesses speak in the strongest terms of the rise in price, and of the enormous profits,—points on which I cannot agree with them when I compare the figures.

Mr. Burton says, 'Since the last treaty (1847) the value (of slaves) has more than trebled.'[4] Colonel Pelly says, 'The margin of profits as between the price of a slave bought in East Africa at from six to twelve dollars, and the price of a slave sold in the market of Asia at from sixty to 100 or 200 dollars, is so great that it is worth the while of the dealer to run almost any risk.'[5] In another place he says, 'A slave bought for 1*l.* 10*s.* would sell at Muscat for about 8*l.* Think of the margin of profit!'[6]

The sheik of Abouthabi, writing to the consul at

[1] Parl. Papers, Class B, 1867, p. 123.
[2] *Ibid.* p. 124.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 128.
[4] Zanzibar, vol. i. p. 465.
[5] Parl. Papers, Class B, 1867, p. 131.
[6] Col. Pelly to Bombay Government, 1862.

Zanzibar in 1868, says, 'The gains are so enormous that it is hopeless to think of stopping them. With ten baskets full of dates, that a man gets on credit, he can get twenty slaves at Zanzibar worth 1,000 dollars.'[1]

Dr. Christie says that the price of slaves has doubled in a few years,[2] and General Rigby supposes a slave bought at Zanzibar for twenty dollars, would sell in Muscat at prices ranging between 60 and 100 dollars.[3]

I have said that the figures are unsatisfactory, and I think it will be admitted that they are so, and though I do not think they justify the opinions I have quoted, those opinions are no doubt of weight. In any case I must leave the reader to unravel the tangle if he can.

On the high seas, or in the waters covered by treaty, a careful distinction must be drawn between slavery and the slave trade. Few Arab dhows float upon the waters without a proportion of slaves amongst the crew.[4] Of the ten or twelve individuals who form the ordinary crew of a mercantile or slaving dhow, from four to six are negro slaves. If they have been long in that condition, they may be easily recognised, by some knowledge of Arabic, by their sailor-like handiness in the affairs of the dhow, and by their identifying themselves with the Arab crew. Until recently, the instructions to naval officers drew no such distinction, and, consequently, every Arab dhow became a legal prize if the capturing officer

[1] Parl. Papers, 1869, p. 46.
[2] East African Slave Trade, p. 32.
[3] Rep. Parl. Com. 1871, p. 560.
[4] Sometimes the whole crew are slaves, and occasionally the captain himself.

chose to insist on that view. It was fairly argued that a certain class of goods might always be sold, whether the immediate intention was or was not to sell them. Hence, if the sale was illegal, the carriage of the goods was also illegal *primâ facie*, and the more so as the owner could adduce no sufficient proof that at some time or other he would not make merchandise of his crew. It is argued, not unfairly, further, that if the so-called domestic slave be exempted from capture on the high seas, the whole traffic will be legalised; every dhow will carry up a proportion of domestic slaves, who will work out their passage to the north, and render a further profit by their sale at the end of it. While such a condition of things would be eminently beneficial to the unfortunate slave, it would be also eminently satisfactory to the slave-consumer, who would thereby get a cheap, well-fed, healthy article, in lieu of a dear, ill-fed, emaciated beast of burden. There is, however, no necessity for allowing the legality of domestic slavery afloat to be the shield which protects illegal trade, and baffles the efforts of the naval officer towards its suppression. This will, however, be better understood hereafter; to enter on the question now might be to anticipate.

I need only add here that, according to common report, the most lawless and good-for-nothing of the northern Arabs engage in the slave trade, and that besides the slaves bought at Zanzibar some thousands are stolen by these men, who are a terror to the southern Arabs.

Such is the northern slave trade from East Africa.

On my passage to Bombay, I had the opportunity of making acquaintance with it to an extremely limited extent, in the few official documents which were supplied for my information, and from conversation with those who had a small personal and hearsay knowledge of it. By far the greater part of what I have now set down is unknown to any trapper when he first commences his operations in the Indian Ocean.

'You are to use'—so run the ordinary directions—'your best endeavours in the suppression of the slave trade.' Given the knowledge of the trade and its various inflexions and ramifications, and we may safely trust the ordinary naval officer to use his 'best endeavours' in that behalf.

CHAPTER III.

THE NAVAL POWERS FOR THE SUPPRESSION OF THE TRADE.

WHEN the naval officer takes up the command of one of H.M.'s ships in the Indian Ocean, most probably he has no such connected idea of the northern slave trade which he is to intercept and suppress as I have given in the previous chapter. There is no 'Hand-book' to the East African slave trade, and he must acquire his knowledge of it chiefly by experience. Information respecting his powers of dealing with the slave trade in general, and instructions more or less minute, are however supplied to him in an octavo volume, the growth of many years' West Coast practice, under the title of 'Instructions for the Suppression of the Slave Trade.'

By far the greater part of this book is occupied by the text of treaties entered into between Great Britain and other European States, for the mutual allowance of search in suspected cases of slave-trading under one another's flags. Very little indeed has anything to do with the East African slave trade: very little help, guiding his proceedings, is given to the naval officer in the Indian Ocean. The book is or was, no doubt, excellent for the West Coast slave trade. But West

Coast experience and East African facts are contrary the one to the other.

France and Turkey are the only civilized States upon whose flags the least suspicion of an illicit trade in slaves rests; and the suspicion does not, in the case of France, thus lie on European ships in European hands, but on Arab vessels in Arab hands. These men, it is alleged, obtain the right to fly the French flag either by a fraud on, or through the carelessness of, the Government of a French colony, and carry on their nefarious practices under its protecting folds. Consequently none of the European treaties, except such as may exist with France and Turkey, at all concern the East African slave-trade suppression.

When, however, the naval authority turns to the heading 'France,' he reads as follows:—'There is no treaty in force between Great Britain and France for the suppression of the slave trade. None of the general instructions are therefore applicable to French vessels. Your conduct towards vessels hoisting French colours shall be regulated exclusively by the confidential instructions with which you have been furnished by the Admiralty.'

Turning now to look for 'Turkey,' and 'Egypt,' as under Turkey, the naval suppressor finds the name of neither State mentioned.

On the other hand, he finds the text of treaties with the following Powers given, all of whose subjects he may 'suspect to be no true men' as regards the slave trade:—Arab chiefs in the Persian Gulf; Cormoro Islands; Madagascar; Mohillah; Muscat; Persia; Zanzibar. And

lastly he notices—without being, perhaps, aware that they concern him more than all the rest put together—some special instructions regarding the ships which own 'no name or nation.'

Turning, after this survey of the special arrangements made with different States, to the general instructions based upon them, he reads these lines, and they afterwards become a sort of formula, or refrain, to the song of the orders he receives from his seniors during his service on the station.

'You will show the utmost diligence in the suppression of the slave trade; at the same time you will be careful to observe moderation in the exercise of the powers with which you are entrusted.'

Further expressions are equally important to the individual officer, but would not be thought worthy of the iteration given to the former. 'If you should exercise those powers in an unwarrantable manner, you will incur the displeasure of Her Majesty's Government, and also render yourself liable to be proceeded against in a court of law; and, if you should detain a vessel without proper cause, you will be personally liable for costs and damages'

The naval commander feels, therefore, that if his powers are large, so also are his liabilities. It is a personal question with him; the officers and men in his ship, though they share in the rewards, take none in the risks.

This matter is further brought home to him by the fact that his 'slave papers'—that is, authorisation to act under the treaties with foreign Powers—are made

out in his own name, and are not transferable except in the case of semi-civilised States.

Passing on with the general instructions, a glance assures him that they were never meant to apply to the slave trade with which he has to deal. They relate wholly to a condition of things which does not exist on the East India station.

In them he is told:—'The vessels subject to your authority by virtue of British jurisdiction are:—

'In British waters—

'All vessels, whatever be their nationality.

'In all waters which are not foreign territorial waters—

'British vessels, and vessels not entitled to claim the protection of the flag of any State or nation.'

'The vessels subject to your authority by treaty are vessels belonging to any State with which Great Britain has a treaty for the suppression of the slave trade; but only within the limits prescribed by the treaty; or, if no limits are prescribed, when found in waters not being territorial waters.'

Having thus ascertained the boundary of his powers over the ships of individual nations, the slave trade suppressor's next care must be to mark out for himself the local limits of his authority, and to draw the cordon beyond which that commerce is safe from his interference.

What, in the first instance, is meant by 'territorial waters'? In its essence the term means any waters over which, or over the entrance to which, the Power possessing the coast can throw shot. Where that

rough kind of jurisdiction can be exercised by territory, the shore is held to have territorial rights. As a convenient mode of avoiding discussion about the range of artillery fire, international lawyers are accustomed to give it an arbitrary range of three miles; hence territorial waters are waters within three miles of any shore whose owner is strong enough or important enough to assert his jurisdiction.

If the reader will now turn to the Chart, he will observe the port of Kilwa (Quiloa) below Zanzibar, on the coast of Africa. Here it is that the territories of the Sultan of Zanzibar may be said to begin; and as he is a potentate of sufficient importance to assert his natural right, there are territorial waters everywhere round his dominions within three miles of the shore up to the port of Lamoo.

This is the northern limit of the Sultan's dominions, and consequently of his 'territorial waters.' If the reader now follows the coast line up till he comes to the entrance to the Red Sea, he will have passed no country or port either willing or able to assert territorial rights over the three miles' belt of water. Travelling up the African side of the Red Sea, he will meet coast which in a gradually increasing degree owns the sway of Turkey or Egypt. At Suez he reaches a civilized port as to whose rights there is no doubt whatever. Passing round by the Arabian coast of the Red Sea, he reverses the process undergone on the opposite shore, and finds as he goes southward an ever-decreasing evidence of Turkish power. Proceeding now out of the Red Sea, he comes at Aden to

British waters, and leaving them, finds all along the shore, to Ras-el-Hadd, no signs of any Power capable of claiming jurisdiction beyond the points of their spears. At, or round, Ras-el-Hadd begin the dominions of the Sultan of Omān, whose power and will to claim jurisdiction increase up to Muscat, his capital. They then decrease again towards Cape Mussendom, long before arrival at which point petty tribes erect 'fortlets,' and would no doubt claim territorial waters—if they dared. Rounding Cape Mussendom, and passing along the Arabian coast, the same condition of things exists: Arab states, with a population of from 1,000 to 5,000, most willing, but most unable, to claim any other rights beyond those which Great Britain allows them.[1]

The passage across the Euphrates takes the traveller into Persian territory, and this Power is sufficiently important to claim and exercise its littoral rights. Beyond Lingeh I am not very sure what these rights may be, for somewhere between that point and Bunder Abbas we come, not upon Omani territory, but upon Persian territory farmed by Omān. Gradually, however, even Omān sovereignty fails as we wend our way out of the Gulf, and passing along the coast of Beloochistan, find ourselves ultimately in British waters at Kurrachee.

Territorial water difficulties, therefore, will not hamper the naval slave-catcher anywhere between

[1] The various chiefs in 1847 entered into engagements with us similar to those with Omān, but our real power is the weakness of the chiefs, not the strength of the treaties.

Lamoo and some undefined point on the African shore of the Red Sea. At some undefined point on the Arabian shore of that sea he finds himself again free of the question, which gives him no more anxiety until he rounds Ras-el-Hadd. At some undefined point on the other side of Muscat he regains his freedom, and carries it up to the Euphrates. There he loses it, and is not certain where it again begins till he finds himself in British waters.

Waters cannot be made territorial artificially, but waters naturally territorial may be made the 'high seas' by treaty. It behoves the naval commander, therefore, to ascertain whether this is the case anywhere along the line of coast examined.

First as to Zanzibar territory. The Sultan, by a voluntary act, has rendered his waters the 'high seas' in respect of the slave trade, during the months of January to April inclusive, in each year. He retains his rights for the remaining months.[1]

Egypt and Turkey have conceded nothing. The approach to their territories in the Red Sea must be marked 'dangerous' by the naval officer.

The Sultan of Omān has, by the treaty of 1845-50, absolutely surrendered his right over Omani waters, so far as the slave trade is concerned, and a slave vessel may be captured under the windows of his palace at Muscat without provoking a remonstrance from him.[2]

[1] The present Sultan has recently proposed to appeal against a decision condemning slave vessels in the close season, on the ground of their capture in his territorial waters. See Parl. Papers, Class B, 1872, p. 40.

[2] My view is capable of dispute on the ground that the treaty authority to seize slavers outside certain limits, implicitly excludes territorial waters from its operation.

Consequently where the territory is certainly Omani, there also the waters are not 'territorial' to the naval suppressor of the slave trade.

Virtually, therefore, if we omit the Red Sea, there are no territorial waters to hamper the naval officer from Lamoo to the Euphrates.

Persia has agreed that, as regards the slave trade, Persian waters shall not protect Persian vessels from search and capture if engaged in that traffic, provided —a very important proviso—a Persian officer shall co-operate.

To the English naval officer, as such, Persia has conceded no powers. Her waters protect the slave trade of every nation except her own, and I am not aware that she has ever furnished to the British man-of-war the personal instrument which alone invests her with any authority.

If the territory be Omani from Bunder Abbas onwards, the naval officer resumes there his powers, as on the high seas.

Whose ships are likely to be met with while engaged in slave-trading along this vast extent of coast, over whom the naval officer may exercise the powers conferred on him by treaty or otherwise? Practically: first, the ships of the Arab tribes, bordering the Persian Gulf; secondly, the ships of Omān; thirdly, those of the Sultan of Zanzibar.

Ships of Turkey may be met, but if they are engaged in the slave trade their detention by the naval officer will be at his own risk. The ships of Persia may be met, but, ordinarily speaking, they must not be interfered

with. The ships of France, possibly engaged in the slave trade, do not, or did not, engage in it north of the equator, and are not likely to be met in the northern slave trade.

The most ordinary slave-trader of all, however, flies no flag, carries no papers, belongs to nowhere, and claims nobody's protection.

In the foregoing sketch we have, I hope, a clear view of the general powers delegated to the naval officer for the suppression of the East African northern slave trade. His power over the Madagascar or southern trade will be discussed when we deal with that trade itself. I must pass now to the 'Instructions' under which the naval commander exercises the jurisdiction committed to him.

All the preliminary instructions are very precise, but need hardly be transcribed here. They relate to the boarding and examination of large ships—ships which may belong to powerful European States, able and ready to resent interference—and are hardly at all applicable to the crazy old Arab dhow often guiltless of name, papers, books or flag, which carries on both the lawful and unlawful trade in East African waters.[1] There are twenty-one clauses prescribing the formalities proper to the first visit; and twelve clauses directing the search, most of which might be carried out towards a civilized ship, but not towards the vessel already described. I should imagine that, in the total inapplicability of such rules to what he has to do,

[1] Most Arab dhows fly a plain red flag, which does not denote nationality more closely than the word 'Arab' expresses.

the naval officer runs some risk of going to the other extreme, and of neglecting all formality whatever.

The instructions relative to detention are far more important than the foregoing. It is by such that the naval officer is determined in passing as lawful, or detaining, and most likely immediately destroying, a vessel supposed to be unlawfully employed.

They are so important that I shall quote them entire; observing, that since my time further instructions, to be hereafter noticed, have been issued.

'If, in the course of your search, you are satisfied that the vessel is engaged or equipped for the slave trade, and that she is subject to your authority, you will proceed to detain her.

'You will be justified in concluding that a vessel is engaged in the slave trade:—

'I. If you find slaves on board; or,

'II. If you find in her outfit any of the equipments hereinafter mentioned:—

'1st. Hatches with open gratings, instead of the close hatches which are usual in merchant vessels.

'2nd. Divisions or bulkheads, in the hold or on deck, in greater number than are necessary for vessels engaged in lawful trade.

'3rd. Spare planks either actually fitted, or fit for laying down as a slave deck.

'4th. Shackles, bolts, or handcuffs.

'5th. A larger quantity of water in casks or tanks than is requisite for the crew of the vessel as a merchant vessel.

'6th. An extraordinary number of water casks, or

other vessels for holding liquid; unless the master shall produce a certificate from the Custom House at the place from which he cleared outwards, stating that sufficient security had been given by the owners that such extra quantity of casks or of other vessels should be used to hold palm oil, or for other purposes of lawful commerce.

'7th. A greater number of mess tubs or kids[1] than is requisite for the use of the crew of the vessel as a merchant vessel.

'8th. A boiler, or other cooking apparatus of an unusual size, and larger, or capable of being made larger, than is requisite for the use of the crew of the vessel as a merchant vessel, or more than one boiler or other cooking apparatus of the ordinary size.

'9th. An extraordinary quantity of rice, of the flour of Brazil, of manioc or cassada, commonly called farinha, of maize, or of Indian corn, or of any other article of food whatever beyond the probable wants of the crew; unless such rice, flour, farinha, maize, Indian corn, or other article of food be entered on the manifest as part of the cargo for trade.

'10th. A quantity of mats or matting greater than is necessary for the use of the crew of the vessel as a merchant vessel; unless the mats or matting be entered on the manifest as part of the cargo for trade.'[2]

Such are the indications prescribed by authority, to justify the detention of an Arab vessel on suspicion of being engaged in the slave trade in the eastern seas. I need hardly, after the description in the previous

[1] Small tubs or buckets.

[2] Instructions, &c., p. 23.

chapter, point out that most of the indications will be absent in the Arab slaver; while many of those present in the Arab slaver will also be present in the legal trader.

The vessel being detained by the naval officer on grounds satisfactory to his judgment assisted by these instructions, the next point is what is to be done with her?

The answer is thus given :—

'After you have detained the vessel, you will, with as little delay as possible, forward her to the proper port of adjudication.'[1]

These proper ports are, for the northern trade: Zanzibar,[2] Aden, Bombay, and Muscat (though in my time it was not certain that the latter was a 'port of adjudication'). They are on an average more than one thousand miles apart, so that generally, if not uniformly, prizes must be sent many hundreds of miles to be condemned. The question arises, how are they to be got over this ground? I have described the vessels, the winds and currents; no English naval officer would willingly trust a prize crew on board a dhow for a voyage of fifty miles, and certainly not for several hundred. If they are to be taken to a prize court, it must be in tow of the ship. Yet supposing it possible to tow them any distance, which they could rarely bear, how can the ship abandon her station, and for the sake of one capture, neglect the suppression of the trade, while she is away at the prize court? The instruc-

[1] Instructions, &c., p. 25.

[2] Zanzibar has not jurisdiction except over Zanzibar vessels. Possibly the case is similar with Muscat.

tions here come to the rescue in a way which could hardly have been contemplated when they were drawn up. 'Should the vessel appear to you not to be in a sufficiently seaworthy condition to be sent in for adjudication, you will cause a survey to be made of her by the officers of your ship best qualified for that duty; and if you should thereupon determine to destroy her, you will draw up a certificate in the form given, and will, if so required by treaty, deliver a copy thereof signed by yourself to the master.'

What is the necessary result of the conditions described, and of this clause in the instructions? It is that the latter becomes the rule. Every detained vessel, unless the capture be made almost within sight of the port of adjudication 'appears to be unfit to proceed' there, is formally surveyed, formally reported unfit, and very informally scuttled or burnt. In the nature of things this must be so. The captain of the ship is judge, jury, and executioner; and in these capacities he must exercise his functions.

I have endeavoured to describe the trade which it is the naval officer's duty to suppress; I have sketched the instructions under which he acts in suppressing it: if he sometimes permits the guilty to pass through his hands, and unwittingly condemns the innocent, I think every allowance must be made for him.

It is perhaps proper here to mention the more recent instructions before adverted to, the main tendency of which is to protect the legal trader. Slave trade is to be distinguished from slavery, and the latter is not to be interfered with on the high seas, on board vessels

under whose governments slavery and the slave trade are legal upon land. Generally speaking the tone of the explanations given would lead the naval officer to pass vessels which he would otherwise have detained, and the more prominent features may be usefully set forth here.

The original ground for detention, furnished to the naval officer, being the finding of slaves on board, and slaves being, as I have said, almost universally found on board, a universal confiscation of the Zanzibar traders might be expected at any moment. To guard against this, the new instructions lay it down thus:—'the mere finding of slaves on board a vessel (a dhow) will not justify an officer in detaining her if there are other circumstances which show that the persons are slaves by the law of the country from which the ship has sailed, or to which she belongs, and that they are not being transported for the purpose of being sold as slaves. Thus, for instance, where the slaves are very few in number, are unconfined,[1] and appear to be on board for the purpose of working the ship, or attending upon the master or the passengers, and there is no other evidence that the vessel is engaged in the slave trade.'[2]

The next important modification of the old instructions, and it is very important—relates to the destruction of slavers. 'My Lords,' says the clause, 'cannot, however, too strongly insist that such destruction of a

[1] This is not the place to comment on these instructions, but I cannot help expressing my surprise at such a condition being suggested as a proof of innocence.

[2] App. to Parl. Rep., 1871, p. 92.

vessel is only to be resorted to as an extreme measure. Nothing will excuse the officer in not sending the vessel to a court of adjudication, except facts showing satisfactorily that doing so would have involved serious danger to the lives of the prize crew.'[1]

Another important clause concerns the disposal of the crew of the detained vessel. The articles in the original instructions[2]—relating as usual to west coast slaving in European vessels—contemplating the despatch of the *detenue* in charge of the prize crew to a port of adjudication—ordered that, if practicable, the whole of the crew of the vessel were to go in her. But at any rate the 'master, mate, or boatswain, the cook or other person belonging to the vessel, previously charged with feeding the slaves,'[3] should be sent, the chief object being, of course, that the other side should be heard before the prize court.

By no law was a penal jurisdiction over the crew of an Arab slaver given to the naval officer in the Indian Ocean; and if, after capture, they wished to proceed about their business, and let judgment go by default in the prize court, the officer did not see how, having destroyed the dhow, he could keep the crew prisoners for months on board, until he reached a port of adjudication. Hence there grew up a custom of allowing the crews to follow their own devices, and be landed, transhipped to other dhows, or carried into port in the

[1] App. to Parl. Rep., 1871, p. 92.

[2] Yet even these directed the landing of the crews of uncivilized African States. See p. 406.

[3] Instructions, &c., p. 25.

ships. The new instructions forbid this practice, and say:—

'Nothing short of necessity will justify any officer in landing any such persons on the coast at random, near the place of capture, or in taking them to any port other than the port of adjudication.

'Their lordships regret to be obliged to remind naval officers of this simple duty, so clearly imposed upon them, and to have to state that the purpose of taking the captured vessel to the proper port of adjudication is not to procure, as a matter of form, a decree of condemnation, but to obtain a full and fair trial of the case; at which trial those concerned in the property may have all reasonable facilities to defend their interest.'[1]

I shall have occasion to revert to these instructions and to the very material bearing they will have, so long as they exist, on the progress of the slave trade; for the present I must allow them to remain without comment.

My sketch of the naval powers would not be complete if I omitted to mention the rewards held out to naval officers for actively prosecuting their duties of suppressing the slave trade. Professional advancement does not necessarily follow successful slave-catching, unless there be resistance and bloodshed. Otherwise it is a money question. There are bounties on the tonnage of vessels condemned, and there is head-money on slaves rescued.

The bounties and head-moneys are payable by the

[1] Rep. Parl. Com. 1871, p. 93.

Treasury to the captors under 5 Geo. IV. cap. 113 and 1 and 2 Vict. c. 47. The theory is that the English Government[1] have the right to purchase into the navy ships condemned for slave-dealing: when this is done, the captors receive the value, but no tonnage bounties. Otherwise the condemned vessels must be broken up, and if sold, must be sold in parts, not in the whole.

When so broken up and destroyed, the captors are entitled first of all to the proceeds, if any, of ship and cargo.[2] Next, to 5*l.* per head on every slave, man, woman, or child, landed alive at the appointed place.

The tonnage bounties are of two kinds, in addition to the proceeds of ship and cargo. A bounty of 1*l.* 10*s.* per ton on every vessel condemned, and one of 4*l.* per ton on every vessel which is without slaves when captured, or which contains so few slaves that the captors elect to surrender the claim for head money on them.

There is a difficult, and delicate question connected with the tonnage bounties, which I hardly know how to handle, and which, if I do not handle in some sort, might leave an impression that I was afraid to touch it. Yet I am convinced I shall satisfy no one by my remarks whatever middle line I might take. I think the difficulty arises from applying West African rules to

[1] And in some cases the Government of the country to which the vessel belongs.

[2] In a case tried some years back at Bombay, I understand the 'cargo' of a slaver was withheld from the captors on proof of ownership by legal traders.

East African facts, and that it need not exist one moment longer than that incongruous proceeding.

I have said that the captain of a man-of-war engaged in suppressing the east coast slave trade is necessarily judge, jury, and executioner; he is beyond this—or at least his officers are—the assessors of damages. Tonnage bounty must be claimed upon certain measurements, and as the vessel is destroyed hundreds of miles from independent witnesses, those who measure must be men directly interested in a large tonnage. The inference—drawn by those with small faith in honour and probity—is immediately that there will be a general over-measurement. Such an inference, it is rumoured, weighs in the final award at home, and a percentage is struck off to allow for it.

This last is a matter into which I have not cared to enquire particularly, as I would fain hope it is not so, for, should it be as reported, the tendency is towards demoralisation.

If the actual measurers of a dhow, generally warrant and petty officers under the close supervision of officers of higher rank, know, or believe, that something will be deducted at home for their presumed over-measurement, the temptation is great to make an allowance there and then to meet it; and no one need doubt that at any rate every proper precaution will be taken against under-measurement. So that the inference drawn by a student of the bad side of human nature may—I do by no means say that it does—produce the very fact he infers.

On the west coast of Africa where the vessel was

measured at the port of adjudication, an independent measurement could be taken. Hitherto the means have been wanting in the Indian Ocean.

I have described the build of the Arab dhow; I must now detail the measurements ordered to be taken, observing that two methods are prescribed, one (by Rule I. of Merchant Shipping Act, 1854) to be taken at the port of adjudication, and if possible by the admeasuring officer of the port, and which would really give an approximate tonnage capacity for any form of vessel; the other (by Rule II.) to be taken by the captors previous to condemnation or destruction, which would only be approximate for ships of European build. This latter is the usual measurement of captured Arab dhows.

Three measurements only are taken: the extreme length, extreme breadth, and extreme girth. Remembering the pear-like shape of these vessels, the most casual reader will observe that such measurements must bring out tonnage results very different from the real capacity of the vessel. In other words, that a ship of European build with those measurements would have very different cubic contents from the Arab dhow. An addition is ordered to be made to the tonnage arrived at by these measurements, in the case of vessels with a poop. Most Arab dhows have poops, and some appear to be nearly all poop. My own experience is this: a dhow very carefully measured under my own eye came out of the calculation very different indeed from her supposed size. Under circumstances such as these, differences of opinion are of constant

occurrence between the ship's agent at home, and the Treasury as to the amount of tonnage bounties payable; and—so strong is the inference—in one case the custom's officials who are charged with the duty of checking tonnage measurements, did not hesitate to report, that no vessel of the dimensions given would swim upright. Yet in the particular instance they had been carefully taken and were correct.

Though I should gladly see naval officers relieved from all liability to have inferences of the kind drawn, yet I do not think that the figures justify any one in drawing them. Burton says the dhows run up to 500 tons in burden, and though I do not remember to have seen one so large, his eye might be as good as mine. The largest slave dhow captured in 1868–9 was estimated by her captors as under 300 tons. The great mass were returned under 200 tons, and a very considerable number under 100 tons.

In order to obtain the bounties, &c., every ship engaged in suppressing the slave trade, appoints at home a 'ship's agent' who represents her interests before the Treasury.

He must produce:—

1. A copy of the decree of condemnation by the Vice-Admiralty Court, and must show that no appeal has been lodged against it.

2. A certificate that the ship has been broken up.

3. Account of sales of the materials and cargo, if any.

4. Certificates of admeasurement of the ship.

5. Receipts for the slaves liberated.

The bounties, head-moneys, and share of proceeds are then paid by the Treasury to the Accountant-general of the Navy for distribution, and are applied as follows:—

1. In repaying to the agent the costs of prosecution.
2. Two-and-a-half per cent. to the agent as his commission.
3. Five per cent. for naval prize balance account.[1]
4. Five per cent. to Greenwich hospital.

After these payments are made, one-thirtieth of the remaining sum goes to the commander-in-chief of the station, and one-tenth to the captain of the capturing ship.

The money now left is divided into shares, amounting in number for a sloop of 1,000 tons and 130 men, to about 1,000.

Of such shares a boy gets one, servants, &c. two, able seamen four, subordinate and petty officers from seven to twelve shares, and, lastly, commissioned officers from twenty to forty-five shares each.

An active ship, fairly lucky, might in my time expect to claim from the Treasury about 2,000*l.* in any one year for slave trade captures, of which the admiral would receive about 60*l.*, the captain about 170*l.*, leaving about 1,500*l.* for division amongst officers and crew. A very successful cruise has been known to produce as much as 10,000*l.* gross, claim, but in such

[1] A balance kept in the hands of the paymaster-general to provide for contingent restitutions, costs, &c., from which sums are paid over yearly to the Consolidated Fund.

cases heavy damages in restitution have sometimes materially diminished the sum for distribution.

I have said before, that while the risks belong to the captain of the capturing ship alone, the rewards are shared by the officers and crew. There is, however, a kind of honourable arrangement or understanding between the captain, his officers, and crew, that the risks, if they develope into actual restitution, shall not be altogether borne by the captain. So that although from various causes the great risks fall on his shoulders, they are more or less relieved by subscription amongst those who have benefited.

Of course slave-capturing, like any other sport, is uncertain, and most commanders on the East India station would, I imagine, agree in believing with me, that the money value of the rewards for activity in suppressing the East African slave trade would never, of themselves, induce any naval officer to undertake the arduous and unpleasant duty.

CHAPTER IV.

BOMBAY.

We have whiled away a three weeks' voyage in a calm while reviewing the African slave trade and the naval powers for its suppression. It is a still bright December day now, as highland after highland north of Bombay rises out of the sea. We scan the horizon where yet there are no lands seen, for it is there, on our right, we shall first observe Bombay. Presently there are two or three faint blotches on the distant horizon. Looked at through a telescope they are dancing in an atmosphere of visible heat, and are changing their shapes perpetually. One shape has settled down into the top of a lighthouse, another becomes the spire of a church, a third the tower of a cathedral. Woods rise on the left: Malabar Hill, we are told. Hills rise further off ahead: Elephanta and Carinja, so the books say. A vast assemblage of masts, houses, palm trees, and pinnacles come next into view: it is the city and shipping of Bombay. A red vessel with a black ball at her mast-head, which we have anxiously looked for, at last appears: it is the outer light-vessel, round which we steer, and then we come rushing up the magnificent water space, which bears upon its breast so many of

England's noblest ships and which bids fair to gather and distribute the whole products of the Eastern world.

The city at this time was slowly recovering from the collapse of '66, but all the wounds were fresh, and in common conversation little was talked of but the losses of the sufferers. These sufferers embraced the whole population of Bombay. High or low, all seemed to have been bitten by the mad dog speculation, to have lost their reason in the haste to be rich, and were but slowly regaining it under the pressure of poverty.

As there is nothing more strange in the modern history of mankind than these volcanic eruptions of speculative fire, so there is no task more hopeless than that of tracing their causes. One of my earliest visits was paid to some of the reclamation works, those works whose shares ran up to such fabulous premiums during the height of the mania, and fell so completely to nothing when the crash came. My astonishment was unbounded when I saw them, for they appeared to my eye such small undertakings in the first instance, and such bottomless pits in which to pour your funds in the second. Looking at Back Bay especially, the cynical thought struck me how very few buyers of those shares could have avoided knowing that somebody *must* lose by the transaction. That any buyer at a high premium could have supposed the scheme would work at a high profit seems incredible. Speculators must have been hoping—if they had in their madness any capacity for hope—that their neighbour's pocket would suffer from their gain.

But in face of such singular phenomena, and bearing

in mind that he who has never mixed in the strife should not boast as he who comes out of it with a whole skin, it is impossible to be cynical. The one thing certain about the Bombay mania is, that every human being present at the time was subjected to the most tremendous temptation to speculate, and that those who had strength enough to resist might be numbered on your fingers. I found it impossible to induce any inhabitant of Bombay with whom I talked, to realise my astonishment at the prices offered and paid for shares. There was but one answer: 'Ah, if you had but been here at the time!'

When a spasm of this kind seizes on a community, it always appears to me as though it then balanced by a rush of unbounded credulity, the tide of unjust suspicion which had been flowing for years past. In Bombay there were one or two individuals who, without the smallest reason, were credited with superhuman honour and unbounded sagacity. The great native speculator Premchund Roychund literally held the fortunes of the whole Bombay community in his hands for some time, and his favour was sought by men who now can only wonder why they sought it. The revelations of the Bombay Bank Commission show that his prestige was so great at one period, that sums approaching millions of money were handed over the counter to him on little better security than his simple promise to pay. The time of inflation seems to have been such that every one trusted in some one else, and recognised in his mentor a better guide than his own common sense. When the crash came, there would have been

as universal a distrust, but the catastrophe seems to have been so absolute that there was not strength enough in the sufferers even to distrust their neighbours. In ordinary conversation, at the time of my visit, one heard much of what had been, little of what was. It was common to point out men who had been worth a million—or thought themselves worth a million—not many months before, and who now were content to live on the income derived from a junior clerkship.

But ruin, as understood in England, seems almost non-existent at Bombay. The ruined men, of whom I saw and spoke with so many, lived quite as well as club men in London, and had as little appearance of ruin about them as it was possible to conceive. One great reason for this phenomenon is that an Englishman, to live at all at Bombay, must live in luxury. This follows not so much from the climate, nor from considerations of health, but because long-established custom has so acted upon external things that there are no appliances provided in the city for the necessities of those who cannot afford to live well. If there be such, they must leave the place; and if men were so ruined by the crash of '66 as not to be able to rise again, they disappeared.

The style of living at Bombay is, in general, wastefully extravagant. There are numbers of brilliant exceptions to the rule, but any one fresh from England cannot avoid surprise at the costly character of the every-day life; and, if the term be not too strong a one, I should say that in too many cases vulgar ostentation is unpleasantly prominent. This extrava-

gance is no new feature amongst Europeans living in the tropics. Mr. Mill, quoting Dr. Rae, agrees with him that the uncertainty of life is one chief cause of it. As regards Bombay, I think that point is certainly not proven. Life is hardly one whit more uncertain for the Europeans at Bombay than in London, if the ready means of escape to Europe in case of serious illness be borne in mind. The true cause I think to be the immensely increased incomes men receive from the moment they set foot on Indian soil. Double any man's income suddenly, and he is almost certain to become extravagant for a time, and the extravagance will become permanent if the persons in whose society he mixes successively find the same thing happening to them. Very soon then, in the locality where these persons live, moderate living will become impossible. Houses of suitably small size will give way to palaces; servants will combine to decline low wages there; prices of articles for every day consumption will rise, while those articles suitable to small incomes will become unobtainable; lastly, the social Mrs. Grundy will set up her standard high, and compel the weak-hearted to bow to it.

All these causes are extremely visible on the face of society at Bombay, and together with topographical and climatic peculiarities fully account for a state of affairs which renders 1,200*l.* a year the normal expenditure of a resident there. This 'thousand[1] a month,' as a Bombay official would put it, seemed to me to take the position in India which is taken by 300*l.* a year in

[1] Rupees.

England; and if such things were published, we might expect rupee pamphlets entitled 'How to live on a thousand a month' exhibited at the railway stations. Certainly, 'How I managed my home on a thousand a month,' would be a selling title, if any ex-Indian chooses to write on such subjects. It seemed to me also, that every minor official spoke of his salary—and every one speaks of his salary in Bombay—as being 'just a thousand a month,' and if any new office was created, its first holder always seemed to start with a salary of 'Rs. 1000.'

Extravagant living at Bombay has its own peculiar causes also. If a man in England, or in any temperate climate, chooses to spend his money on immediate pleasures, or even in mere ostentation, there are so many varieties of desirability available for his purposes, that 'vulgar' ostentation need not be apparent. He may keep hounds, throw cultivated land into park, purchase the fishing of a fiord in Norway or a river in Canada. He may pull down his barns and build greater; he may bribe himself into a seat in the House, for the pleasure of being ejected on petition. He may start a railway from nowhere to the other side of the way; or he may fight a dispute about two and sixpence up to the House of Lords. There are thousands of methods by which he may gratify his taste for social publicity. But all these things are denied to the Englishman at Bombay. He lives in a sort of suburban London, consequently hunting is not to be thought of. He owns not a rood of the alien land in which he finds himself, consequently he cannot spend

his money on it. There are no fiords or rivers to purchase, and no fish in them at any rate. To bribe himself into the legislative council would be hopeless, if desirable. The proper thing is to get a Government guarantee in railway matters in India—too safe a proceeding for the gentlemen I am describing. When there is no House of Lords to fight it up to, what is the use of disputing about two and six-pence?

What then is left to the person of ostentatious and extravagant tastes? How is he to gratify them? He can give dinners: and as soon as he is tired of giving dinners, he may give more dinners, and he does so.

These dinners are a terrible ordeal to get through for any one not used to them. As they hold the position of the single hospitality possible, and as the company gathered together have been meeting and re-meeting each other at dinner for months, the dinner itself—the eatables and drinkables—comes in for a share of attention which goes far to confirm the truth of the popular notion of Darwin's theory. Surely dining humanity in such circumstances can trace its quadrumanal origin? But joking apart, I have dined at tables in Bombay which simply made me melancholy. We had met to eat and drink as much as we could hold, and to satisfy ourselves that what we eat and drank should be of as great value as it was possible for things eatable and drinkable to bear. This, however, was not always so, nor perhaps, was it so in a majority of cases; yet it was frequent enough to make an impression upon me, and I think would do so upon most temporary sojourners at Bombay.

For reasons difficult to ascertain, Bombay is not popular in the navy, and the latter service believes that the unpopularity is mutual. It is altogether singular, for at every other port in India a completely opposite state of feeling exists. Calcutta is a delight to the blue jacket, and he believes himself a delight to Calcutta. Yet the moment one begins to separate the community of Bombay into its component parts, the component parts of the navy find plenty of attractive particles. The breezy bungalows on Malabar Hill ring too often and too continuously with the chatter of naval tongues to permit them to wag against their hospitable inmates. Yet all this pleases us not, so long as we see Mordecai sitting at the gate. The navy is a spoilt service in some respects. It holds its head high, and draws a distinction between the private offerings of friendship and the public tribute to a great service. Bombay is more than any port in the world liable to attack from the sea, and the navy does not forget on whom it must depend for succour, if it fancies a slight is aimed at it by Bombay as a community.

It is common to speak of Bombay as possessing a beautiful harbour; but there is a good deal of imagination in the phrase. The town is on a dead flat, only relieved by the rather distant low wooded hills of Malabar and Kambala. The mainland is higher, but the outline of the hills is not generally picturesque, and there is no middle distance to relieve the waste of water between the town side and the other.

Trotting bullocks, cotton, buggies, and Parsees, are

the objects which chiefly strike the attention of the visitor to Bombay. The trotting bullock is a real wonder, if his driver, who deals with him in pairs, be not a greater one. Judging from the tone of the Hindoo charioteers, I do not suppose there ever was a living being of a more aggravating character than the Bombay bullock. He seems to do nothing rightly: an outsider sees him patiently trotting with his head bowed under the wooden yoke, and his large eyes appealing to the bystanders for sympathy; but his master sees in every pace mutiny, and in every motion of his ears, obstinate perversity. He rails on him with never-ceasing iteration and reproach.

Cotton in vast bales pervades the place. In huge stacks ready for sale or shipment, it forms a feature of the landscape; dragged along in creaking carts by the offending, but still trotting bullocks, it impedes the highways, and blocks the byways.

The buggy is a very high gig, with a hood. It is driven by a crouching Indian, who squats on the seat when he has not a fare, tries to remain there when he has a European fare, but is usually poked down to the foot-board with the point of a white cotton umbrella. It is a misnomer to say a buggy is driven. It would be better to state that in the wayward struggle between the man and the beast which results in progress, the man often has the best of it. The buggy driver does not rail at his horse, he rails at every other driver, and at all the bullocks. His only apparent means of coercion to his horse is a thread tied on to the end of a straw. To come to church in a wide-

awake in England, and to drive in a buggy in Bombay, incur for the individual the same social disabilities.

The Parsee is the great personal feature of Bombay. About a quarter of a million of the remnant of the followers of Zoroaster, with about a dozen names between them, remain as Parsees to attest either the practical temperament of the race, or the practical result of their leader's teaching. They incorporated abstinence from beef in their religion when the Hindoo was in the ascendant; and abstinence from pork when the Mohammedan ruled them; they now eat neither. But a race which is Anglicising itself by main force, is too marvellous a study to be introduced here. Let it be said there is no pleasanter neighbour to sit beside at dinner than the educated Parsee gentleman, and no pleasanter man to do business with than the Parsee merchant. The Parsee shines in the choice of a horse, and on the cricket field. Every evening on the esplanade, many Parsee cricket clubs may be seen at work, and you may hear the familiar cry of 'butter-fingers' as the ball slips from the grasp of the youth in bright pink and sky blue, who has missed it: while you may watch its further progress until it brings up against a group of Mohammedans at their prayers. Disgusting as are certain religious rites still maintained by the more orthodox Parsees, the religion is as far removed from an idolatry of fire as anything well can be. The fact that there are Parsee Lodges excellently worked, will explain this point to the members of 'the craft' without further comment. Not the least marvel about the Parsees are their

prayers, the sense of which has been dead for perhaps a thousand years, while the sound has remained intact.

It seems to be at, and about Bombay, that the wonderful policy of amalgamating the interests of a subjugated and a conquering race, while the races themselves remain separate, is receiving its widest development. The walls of Brahminism seem to be practically breached at Bombay, and there it is beginning to be found that a man may lose caste in its Indian sense without losing it in its English sense amongst his fellows. As an illustration I will just relate one anecdote. The bar of Bombay, while I was there, desired to do honour to a dignitary of the law who was about to leave the place. The idea was a public dinner, but it was suggested that this would exclude the native barristers from all participation in the tribute of respect. The question was put to them by the English bar: 'Will you join us in a dinner?' The answer was, 'Won't we?' The further question, 'But you won't eat beef with us?' brought the further answer, 'Just try us.'

Any evening on the esplanade at Bombay, when I was there, amongst the carriages of native princes, Hindoo merchants, Parsee millionaires, and blanched English ladies, might be seen one of some special mark. It was always well-appointed, well-driven, and furnished with attendants in bright scarlet. A spare, handsome, dark-featured Arab reclined on its cushions, whose restless bright eye contrasted strangely with the ease of his attitude. This was his Highness Syud

Toor-Kee, the *detenue* guest of the Bombay Government. His one thought is how to raise sufficient money or force, to place himself on the throne of his late father at Muscat.

What is the connection of Bombay with the slave trade? It is the rendezvous and head-quarters of H.M.'s cruisers now, as it was of the Indian navy aforetime, and the only people in Bombay whose attention is prominently turned towards the extinction of the trade in blacks, are the officers and men who there refit the ships worn in that service. The trade flows past Bombay, but touches it not publicly in transit, unless it be in the rare case of a man-of-war carrying her rescued cargo thither, or the less rare case of an overflow of freedmen from Aden.

In the days of the Indian navy, Bombay was even less connected with suppressing the slave trade than it is now.

'In former days the condition of the slave trade was very flourishing, so much so that the East India Company considered it necessary to put it down, and their agents in the Persian Gulf and at Muscat entered into treaties with the various chiefs for that purpose. But the difficulties attending the suppression of the slave trade, with regard to the Indian navy, were so great that the officers belonging to that service never made any captures. In the courts of justice at Bombay, a captain, after having made a capture, was deprived of his command, in order that the evidence of the officers might not be influenced by him; so that very few captains took the trouble to capture slavers.'[1]

[1] Rep. Parl. Com. 1871, p. 26.

It is even stated that ships of the Indian navy when they saw an undoubted slaver, put their helms up and ran away to avoid being obliged to capture her.[1]

This was not probably the case in the vicinity of Aden, for Indian cruisers are represented as being active in the suppression of the Red Sea trade.[2] There may have been, as there are now, greater facilities, and less expense in the Aden, than in the Bombay courts.

But in the Persian Gulf, and perhaps elsewhere, not one single capture was made during twenty-four years under the provisions of the treaty with the Gulf Arabs.[3]

But though Bombay's efforts in suppression were not vigorous, there have been from time to time, even down to quite recent years, accusations that the great commercial centre participated in the guilt and the profits of the trade.

In 1841, the case was proved against her. The subjects of the Sultan of Muscat and Zanzibar were in the habit of bringing negro slaves from Africa for sale to Bombay, and of taking back Hindu females for the same purpose to Zanzibar. The male negroes were carried into port as part of the crew, and the females as their wives. As a large portion of the crew of native boats was (and is) composed of negroes, it was extremely difficult, if not impossible, for any examining officer to ascertain whether the Africans on board were

[1] Parl. Com. p. 26. See also Parl. Rep. W. Coast Africa, 1865, p. 466, where it appears *one case*, involving the capture of 13 slaves, was tried in the Bombay Courts between 1848 and 1864.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 42.

[3] Bombay Records, vol. xxiv. p. 637.

bonâ fide seamen, or brought for sale. It was then said, that so little repugnance was entertained by the negroes themselves to be sold out of the vessels bringing them, that both males and females readily joined in the deception, and if interrogated, seldom if ever failed to corroborate the statement of the commander as to their composing part of the equipage of the vessel.[1]

Coming down twenty years later, the possible connection of Bombay with the slave trade is thus laid out by the Political Resident at Zanzibar, in 1862.

'A is a British Indian subject, the owner of a dhow, B is an Arab, who wants to run a cargo of slaves to Muscat, but fears to fall in with a cruiser if he runs coastwise. So B comes to A and says, "I hear you want a crew to take your dhow to Bombay: you have lent me money on occasion; it would now be a pleasure to me to lend you a crew, with one of my Arab nakodas in command. I should not ask any remuneration, only when the dhow arrives at Bombay, just give the nakoda (captain) his discharge." A thus gets his dhow run for nothing. B puts a crew—slaves—to the number of fifty on board, in charge of his nakoda. The dhow arrives at Bombay. The slaves of course are free so soon as they step on British soil; only, it is not quite so easy to eradicate from the mind of a slave, the slave habit of mind and feeling,—the instinct of seeking protection and support, in which he has been brought up,—as it is to codify a law declaratory of British freedom.

'Presently the firm to whom the dhow is consigned,

[1] Bombay Records, vol. xxiv. p. 651.

are about to run a bugalow to Muscat. "Very well," says B, the nakoda, "I must return to Zanzibar in any event. You have fed my people while in Bombay, I will run your bugalow to Muscat *en route*, no charge, only a 'buckshish' for myself, if you are content with me and my crew, on discharge at Muscat."

'Now observe: everybody is contented with this little arrangement. Nobody is taxable with slave-dealing: cross-question the boat-owners—they have engaged a crew. Ask the nakoda—he has of his own free will tendered his services: ask the crew—they are all free men, and by no means willing to be interfered with; yet, in point of fact, a cargo of slaves is run from Zanzibar to Muscat, through Bombay.'[1]

The only part of the transaction thus hypothetically described which I should doubt is, that so large a number as fifty slaves could be brought in one vessel without attracting suspicion. From the whole character of the vessels, the trade, and the persons who navigate these native craft, I should think it more than probable that a proportion of the slave trade now passes to the north, *viâ* the harbour of Bombay or other Indian ports. It would seem to me also almost impossible to carry out an inspection of native traders so minute as to stop such a slave trade, did it exist. As pointed out in 1841, and in the above extract, the main difficulty would be the objection of the slave himself to give such evidence as would take him from under the care of those he knows, to place him under no care, or under such care as he knows not of. Everywhere standing in

[1] Pelly to Bombay Government, July 10, 1862.

the way of his freedom we meet the objection of the negro to be free.

Coming down still later, to 1866, I find Captain Bedingfield, writing from Zanzibar, says, 'I am told that all the crews of the Bombay dhows are slaves belonging to people here; they are paid nominally two or three dollars for the voyage to Bombay and back. Many of them, however, never find their way back, and are taken on to the Persian Gulf.' Naturally such a statement provoked enquiry, and the commissioner of police at Bombay reported as follows:—'On the arrival of all Arab dhows in Bombay harbour, they are immediately boarded by the water police and well searched, their crews and passengers are mustered, and previous to their being allowed to leave the port again the same precautions are adopted, and if all is found satisfactory, a certificate to this effect is signed by the deputy commissioner of the water police and the senior magistrate, without which the nacoda (captain) is unable to obtain his port clearance from the customs authorities.

'After consulting with the commissioner of customs and deputy commissioner of the water police, an officer of long experience in the harbour, I am of opinion that the crews of the Arab dhows arriving in Bombay harbour are not slaves; they are constantly on shore, and never complain of undue restraint, though they have every opportunity for doing so, and in this opinion, the commissioner of customs has authorised me to say that he fully agrees.'[1]

[1] Slave Trade, Class B, 1868, p. 134 *et seq.*

If the reader has followed me thus far, he will, on comparing his previous reading with the foregoing quotation, be able to form some notion of the extreme complexity of the slave trade suppression question.

The instructions now furnished to the naval officer from England inform him, almost in so many words, that slaves are to be expected as part of the crew of every Arab vessel navigating the seas. Officials of long experience engaged in the daily search of Arab dhows at Bombay say that there are no slaves in them. The freedom from restraint is adduced in the one instance as a proof that the slave is not for sale, and in the other that he is not a slave at all; while it is abundantly on record at Bombay itself that the Arab never uses restraint to his slaves, and that the grand difficulty of all is to get the slave to own to his slavery.[1]

I cannot, however, suppose that Bombay, or India anywhere, could be now, or could ever have been, a large importer of African slaves. India is a large exporter of labour, and I have always understood that the free Indian was a cheaper article than the negro slave. At Mauritius, which consumes a great deal of Indian labour, the Indian is much preferred to the negro, although the one comes and goes at his will, and the other is made over to the planter by Government, and is therefore a slave with a limit to his slavery.

It cannot be therefore, I should think, that Bombay could ever participate extensively in developing the

[1] We shall have abundant direct proof of this further on.

illicit traffic: that can only be done by a country which largely imports the commodity.

Bombay, as I have remarked, is connected with slave trade suppression by the occasional arrival of a cargo of rescued slaves in a man-of-war, and by the more frequent discharge of the overflow of freedmen from Aden.

Mr. Vivian states that the latter only takes place when a notification comes from Bombay that the freedmen can be employed there;[1] but my impression was, that when the pressure became too great at Aden, negroes were sent on to Bombay, whether there was any immediate prospect of their being employed or not.

Sir Bartle Frere speaks of the disposal of rescued slaves at Bombay as a great trouble. When they were few, and chiefly adults, there was not such a difficulty in dealing with them; but when they increased in numbers 'there were some very painful cases, some of the men being kidnapped, and others, women,' in a worse condition.[2] As the children were the most difficult to deal with in the way of disposal, the missionaries were consulted, and there grew up at Sharanpur near Nassik, some ninety miles north-east of Bombay on a line of railway, a branch of the 'Church Missionary' establishment there, under the name of the African Asylum. It is entirely maintained by Government; and, since 1860, when it was first established, about 200 children have been received into it.

[1] Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 3.

[2] *Ibid.* p. 36.

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It now shelters sixty-nine inmates, forty-five boys and twenty-four girls, but 'the number received into the asylum represents but a small proportion of the slaves who have been rescued and brought to Bombay. For several years *none* have been sent to us, though considerable numbers have been set at liberty.'[1]

Unhappily — always 'unhappily' with the negro, unless he is a slave — there is very good reason given, by a previous report from the same source, why Government should stay its hand in this particular direction. 'I do not know,' says the Principal of the Institution, 'whom I shall bewail most, those who after their arrival here are made over to Mohammedans, and adopt their religion; or those who, after having been instructed in the Way of Life in our institutions at Sharanpur, are then thrown amongst the very dregs of European society on the railways, participate in their sins, and are a shame and dishonour to Christianity.'[2]

As to the ordinary rescued slave at and near Bombay, the same authority says, 'For the most part they fall into the hands of the Arabs of Bombay, whose first care is to turn them into Mussulmans, and then to use them for their own purposes. I am informed that in some cases they are quietly shipped from Bombay, and sold again into slavery—a fate not less happy, perhaps, than that of many others, who are to be found in the slums of Bombay and Poona, "stran-

[1] Annual Rep. C. M. S. Miss. Ind. Bombay, 1872, p. 10.
[2] Quoted by Bishop Tozer, East African Slave Trade, p. 21.

gers in a strange land," in a wretched and helpless condition, with no one to care for them.'[1]

As a mourning border to a dark picture, let me note that, in five years at Bombay, the negro births were thirty-seven, and the deaths 754.[2]

[1] Rep. p. 11.
[2] East African Slave Trade, p. 21.

CHAPTER V.

'AGGIS.'

So important a part in these experiences will be taken by the individual who bears the title set down above, that I have thought him worthy of a chapter all to himself, even though it be a short one.

'You are not to suppose that he has not got a longer name if he chooses to use it,' said Betsy Trotwood to David Copperfield, in reference to Mr. Dick, and so I say to the reader, in reference to Mr. Aggis. 'Bin Moosa—Saleh bin Moosa—that's the gentleman's true name.' If it be enquired how he came to take the additional title of Aggis, it may be mentioned that he either inherited or purchased a little property of eggs in the presence of some of the blue jackets. The nearest approach to the English name of the little property that the lips of Bin Moosa could frame was 'Aggis.' Henceforth, in familiar converse they called him so, while on state occasions, and in official language, we spoke of him as the son of Moosa.

He was our interpreter, I believe a thoroughly honest one, as far as his limited powers went; and, according to common repute, the only honest one

connected with Her Majesty's navy on the East India station at that time.

In person he was small, slight, and gracefully built. His features betrayed a mixed blood, in which the Arab predominated; his colour was deep enough to show how much his negro ancestors had to say to it. Aggis was by no means bad-looking. His age might be five-and-twenty or thereabouts; his features were small and not ill-cut, his expression gentle and frank. Except when engaged in the labour of interpreting, the countenance of Saleh bin Moosa was rarely without a smile. His usual dress was the white or sober-coloured robe of the Arab, a garment fitting close round the neck, and falling without gathering or fold, except a belt round the waist, to within an inch or two of his naked finely-formed feet. His ordinary head-dress was a scarlet skull-cap, not picturesque enough to receive the dignified name of Fez. This was Bin Moosa's every-day costume, but when he was prepared to accompany me on a state interpreting expedition, he arrayed himself gorgeously in a white cotton under garment, and an outer robe of splendid crimson. When he had added a portentous turban of the usual blue-grey and white cotton check, a captured slaver's sword, and a pair of sandals, Saleh bin Moosa stood forth a dignified Arab gentleman, not to be addressed by the too familiar name of 'Aggis.'

His history was singular and by no means uninstructive to remember.

Born in the Island of Johannah, and owning alle-

giance to its prince, Bin Moosa early turned his attention to commercial pursuits. The black stock cattle, for which the plains down Mozambique way are celebrated, appeared to him to promise an excellent field for an enterprising merchant. His early ventures to Madagascar and the Comoro Islands seem to have been small and not unsuccessful. He rose in the world, married in his native land, and was presented by his lady with an Achmet-bin-Saleh-bin-Moosa, and other pledges of affection. His next speculation was on a larger scale, but turned out disastrously —he fell into the hands of the Portuguese, who confiscated his living merchandise, and soundly flogged the unhappy merchant. Bin Moosa was not, however, to be daunted. He freighted, either entirely on his own account, or in partnership with others, a tall ship, with the choicest specimens of Mozambique humanity. His purpose was to dispose of them at a profit, in the usual markets of Madagascar. Boyanna Bay was his first port of call, and he reached its mouth happy in the success which Allah had so far deigned to grant to his commercial enterprise and industry. But alas! round a projecting headland, when his ship was just in a condition and situation which rendered her powerless to discharge her cargo or fly, there appeared a British man-of-war, rushing at speed upon the prey. Bin Moosa, his dhow, and his cargo, all fell into the hands of the English, and the second large venture turned out as disastrously as the first, barring the flogging. Bin Moosa now awoke to the conviction that the English were right—that Allah abhorred the man-

trade, and had brought these judgments upon him in order to show his servant that truth. He took the resolution that as his life had hitherto been devoted to the furtherance of the slave trade, so now his later years should be given up to its suppression. He had picked up in his various expeditions, a smattering of Portuguese, some Malagassy, and a few words of English. Swahili, the coast language of Africa, and the usual language of Zanzibar, and Arabic, were his native tongues. He offered his services as interpreter to the captain of the man-of-war which had made capture of his cargo; they were accepted, and he became an integral portion, for the time, of the force suppressing the slave trade in the Indian Ocean.

The literary knowledge of Aggis is not extensive—I believe him to be acquainted with some of the Arabic characters when plainly written. I doubt whether he can readily detect the difference between Swahili, written in Arabic characters, which is, I am told, the usual nature of a Zanzibar document, and pure Arabic itself. But he is keenly anxious to learn, and works at his Koran, as a combined literary and religious training, with persistency and determination. If his progress is infinitely slow, this is to be looked for in the absence of any outward assistance.

At first Aggis and I converse wholly on questions of slave-trading import. He knows nothing of the northern trade, and at first appears to consider that a *primâ facie* suspicion attaches to every native craft that sails the northern seas, and that it is a safe proceeding to burn, sink, and destroy them, without fur-

ther question. Later on, as we shall see, he observes a distinction between the illegal trader, and his illicit confrère—between the legal domestic slave for use, and the illegal, newly purchased, or stolen slave for sale.

At first I do not know him by his more familiar name, and he is then 'Moosa' to me.

'Well, Moosa,' I begin, accosting him as he politely raises his red skull-cap, in offering me a morning greeting, 'think we shall catch slaver to-day?'

We are, say, on our way from Aden to Bombay, and there is, we believe, nearly as much chance at that season of our falling in with an iceberg.

'Oh!' replies Moosa, putting his forefinger with precision on the breech of the gun near which we were standing, 'Oh! suppose slaver come—we catch him.'

I should remark, by the way, that he always begins with 'Oh!' and that he uses his forefinger as an inflexion of his language. If he knows himself to be precise in his facts and statement, his forefinger goes down at once, and without hesitation. If he is rather doubtful, he marks the spot he intends to put his finger on, but approaches it by degrees, and with circumspection. If he is very doubtful indeed, the finger goes sketching about the table, or other object at hand, and does not settle at any one place.

'But,' say I, 'I think slaver no come just now.'

'Oh!' says Moosa, with the hesitating forefinger: 'suppose one dhow—come Zanzibar—go Sur (pronounced Soor)—bring plenty slaver: yes: plenty slaver.'

I must observe that Bin Moosa has never noticed the difference between the 'slave' and the 'slaver.' They are both 'slavers' in his language.

'Yes:' again observes Bin Moosa, 'yes, plenty slaver: plenty slaver,' and down goes the forefinger with precision.

'But,' I still argue, 'I think dhow not come Zanzibar go Sur just now.'

'Oh!' continues Bin Moosa, 'suppose good wind—plenty good wind—slaver come. Suppose not good wind, slaver not come.' And this latter point is marked off with decisive accuracy.

Still sticking to my point, I say: 'But I think no good wind now.'

This is beyond Bin Moosa. The finger wanders considerably. 'Oh! by-and-by come good wind I think,' is his expression, denoting the close of the conference.

When I come to know Aggis better, we take a wider range in our converse. He tells me how satisfied he is of the wickedness of the slave trade, and how he believes Allah will ultimately punish those who engage in it. He is an excellent Mohammedan. Strict in all his religious duties, as far as his knowledge of them goes—says his five legal prayers daily: studies his Koran as I before said: abjures silk, pork, rum, and tobacco—except, perhaps, on occasions, and under trying circumstances. He is eminently sincere, and also eminently tolerant. He confided to me that his co-religionists on shore jeered and chaffed him for his relations with the Christian crew of the ship.

'Oh!' he declared, 'they say to me "you eat pork on board that ship—Englishmen all eat pork—you eat pork too!" I say, "Englishman eat pork—but I no eat him; Englishman no tell me eat him." "Oh!" they say, "you drink grog—you smoke—you no say your prayers." "Oh!" I say, "no drink grog, no smoke: say prayers, Englishman say prayers all same. Oh!" I say, "Englishman all same."'

'Yes,' he observes after a pause, 'all same God. He like you have Sunday—no work Sunday—eat pork, drink grog—he like me have Ramadan (I forget the word he used), no eat pork, no drink grog. All same God: yes.'

Later on in our acquaintance he found his way into my cabin.

'Oh! suppose ship go Zanzibar—go Kilwa by'n by?'

'Yes,' I answered, 'very likely ship go there by-and-by.'

'Oh! plenty slaver Kilwa—plenty slaver Angoja (pronounced Angozshia, and meaning Zanzibar). Suppose stay long time Zanzibar?'

'Yes, perhaps stay a long time there.'

'I think I like go Johanna, suppose long time Zanzibar.'

'What,' I reply, 'you want to see your wife and children, I suppose?'

'Oh, yes, Captain; like go Johanna, see wife and children, then come back ship—oh, I no want to leave ship.'

'Well,' said I, 'Aggis, I should think we might

manage that; but perhaps, suppose you go Johanna again, you get another dhow and carry slaves?'

'Oh,' said Aggis, shaking his head, 'no more slaver, God not like— no more slaver, but like to see child.'

When, however, the ship got to Zanzibar, Bin Moosa satisfied himself with hearing from a friend of his wife's welfare, and either writing or sending her a message; he was too fond of the ship and his work, perhaps also his steady though small pay, and he did not leave.

Possibly I have now made the reader sufficiently familiar with Bin Moosa's character and idiosyncrasies, to avoid the necessity of interrupting the narration of the scenes in which he was an actor for that purpose. In closing this sketch of him, I may note that the very last of my slave-catching experiences, and not the least pleasant, was the sight of Aggis coming over the side of the P. and O. ship, just as I was starting on my homeward route, to shake hands with me for the last time. He had to pay a boat to effect his purpose of bidding me a final good-bye, and I fancied I shook the hand of a man who was honest according to his lights when he parted from me.

CHAPTER VI.

MUSCAT AND OMĀN.

My ship had been some time refitted and ready for sea, before we received our final orders to proceed to Muscat and the Persian Gulf. The delay which had taken place was a matter of sincere regret to us all, as it shortened the time at our disposal, and prevented us taking that full survey of the Gulf, its towns and populations, which we had looked forward to with something like enthusiasm. Another, and very considerable disappointment consisted in the fact that we should lose the coldest weather, and should have but a short experience of weather even moderately cool. We were not unaware of the importance of being sufficiently braced up to stand the south coast of Arabia—whither we were afterwards bound—in May and June. But in any case, the idea of turning our backs on the monotony of Bombay life, met with general favour; and when we dropped our sails to the afternoon's sea breeze, the topsails ran up to the mast-heads with spirit, top-gallant sails and royals followed, and, bellying with the freshening wind, dragged us through the shipping, and out to sea, when we

turned our head in the direction where, 800 miles from us, lay Muscat.

We were terribly unlucky this time in the matter of wind. Whenever it was fair it was light, and whenever it was foul it was strong; and no weather is considered more unsatisfactory when one is in a hurry. At such time one's thoughts revert continually to the engines with loving regret, and one looks upon the coal with something of the feelings that must possess a school-boy, outside a cake shop, with an insufficient supply of money in his pocket. One would like to steam, but cannot afford it; 30*l.* or 40*l.* a day for a single ship causes reflection; and one recollects 'Honourable members below the gangway,' and how the honourable gentleman, the member for his seat at the Board of Admiralty, finds it necessary to go home and declare to his colleagues, that he can no longer stand the badgering he is getting relative to the cost of coal for H.M.'s ships, and that officers in command must receive further warning on the subject. And so, on the whole, though one would dearly like to steam and be done with it, we go tacking about under sail, and hope for better times.

But though the passage is tedious, it is not altogether dreary. We have possessed ourselves of 'Palgrave's Arabia,' and of other books on Arabia of a solid nature; and the lighter and more romantic side of what is in prospect is supposed to be discovered in the 'Fire Worshippers.' We hope to visit 'Harmozia;' to round 'Selama's sainted cape;' to sweep over 'Omān's green waters,' and to quaff the 'red weepings

of the Shiraz vine.'[1] Beside all this, the Bombay papers had been supplying us with Gulf news for some time past, and Gulf news, at all times interesting to a stranger, was at this time more than usually so. Political affairs in the kingdom of Omān, whose capital is Muscat, were in a very unsettled state, and it was not unreasonable to suppose we might have a small war on our own account. Her Majesty's ships in their periodical visits to the coasts of Arabia have always to employ some moral force, and occasionally physical force as well. And though I do not say we actually wished it, yet we were not averse to the prospect of such contingencies.

The State of Omān, pronounced Ŏmān, and not Ōmān as Moore gives it, occupies the south-eastern corner of Arabia. Its area is unknown, for in that happy state of uncertainty in which the Arab delights to live, no maps exist of the ruler's dominions, nor is there any person who could define the boundaries. The race inhabiting the kingdom consists mainly of two great Arab tribes, the Beni-Henavi, and the Beni-Gaffree: and these two great sections are sub-divided into numerous smaller tribes.

So far back as 1695 the tribes of Omān were in ascendency in the Persian Gulf, and carried out the Arab policy of impartial depredation with considerable vigour. Omān became really a great naval power; and, not content with ravaging the shores of the Gulf and demolishing all trade there, her chiefs built in Pegu

[1] 'Very good for sauce,' as a friend to whom I sent a sample informed me.

larger classes of ships, and in the early part of the eighteenth century made several descents on the strongholds of the Mahrattas on the Malabar coast.

Something like a tacit alliance seems from the very first to have existed between the English in the East, and the rulers of Omān, and in 1798 a treaty was drawn up at Muscat by which the Sultan bound himself to our interest, and engaged to exclude the French and Dutch entirely from his dominions. The friendship between the states thus formally inaugurated, continued unbroken until a very few months before the *Dryad* received her orders.

A single family, the descendants of Ahmed-bin-Said, who was Sultan in 1717, have since held the sultanship of Omān, although different branches of that family have in turn possessed it. Zanzibar having long been a tributary of Omān was more closely united to it under Syud Said-bin-Sultan-bin-Ahmed, the grandson, therefore, of the original Ahmed. Syud Said, who succeeded to the government in 1807, and retained it till his death in 1855, was the firm friend of the British, and the greatest chief who ever ruled in Omān. He divided his time between Zanzibar and Muscat, but latterly was chiefly to be found at Zanzibar: if I remember rightly, he died on his way to Zanzibar, on board one of his ships. During his lifetime he appointed Syud Majid, his son, Viceroy of Zanzibar, and Syud Thoweynee, an elder son by an Abyssinian mother, Viceroy of Omān. He left several other sons, brothers and half-brothers of these two, of whom

Syud Burgash, is now (1873) Sultan of Zanzibar, and Syud Toorkee, Sultan of Muscat.

Syud Said-bin-Sultan was very well known in his lifetime in England, and especially in the navy, by the title of 'the Imaum of Muscat.' As late as 1863, the navy list bore a ship named the 'Imaum,' as a memento of Syud Said's good feeling towards the English—the ship having been a gift from His Highness to William IV. At the present hour, the name remains on the list of possible names which may be taken by new ships. It is, perhaps, illustrative of the state of our knowledge of things Asiatic, that Syud Said was never 'Imaum' of Muscat. The title is not civil, but ecclesiastical. It seems to correspond with Patriarch or Pope, and the bearer of it must be a priest, which I believe Said was not. The ruler of Muscat must be Sultan, but may not be Imaum, and Syud Said was only acknowledged by the tribes as Sultan.[1]

Any one who attempts to master the intricacies of Arab politics will be much puzzled by the variety of spelling adopted by the officials who are the chief authors to be consulted. There is no sort of change possible with the name of 'Said' which has not been given to it. It will be found spelt 'Said,' 'Seyd,' 'Saeed,' 'Sueed,' and many other ways. I have taken that spelling which best gives the sound. The title 'Syud,' I should remark, is given to all members of the reigning family. It seems to correspond somewhat to our title of 'Highness,' but as you cannot

[1] Even 'sultan' itself, though I have heard Arabs use the title, is only a convenient English way of denoting the chief.

escape from religion in any question of Arab custom or politics, I believe there is an ecclesiastical twang about the title 'Syud'—also spelt 'Seyd' and otherwise —which is not included in 'Highness.' [1]

Syud Said was great at sea. In 1834 he had at Zanzibar one seventy-four-gun ship, one fifty-, and one twenty-six-gun frigate, two corvettes of twenty-four and ten guns, and a schooner yacht. All these, except the twenty-six-gun frigate, were in excellent condition, fit to go anywhere. It was different in my time, and even the last remnants of the old fleet were destroyed in the cyclone at Zanzibar in 1872.

Succession amongst the chiefs of Arabia is neither hereditary, nor regularly elective. Primogeniture conveys no rights; and though the will of the last chief carries a certain weight with it in the appointment of a successor, the right of appointment is not acknowledged. So far as my limited knowledge allows me to judge, I believe an Arab native looks on a succession, without any fighting for it, as a mean-spirited kind of proceeding: a sort of play in which the part of the chief character is read by a volunteer in the absence of the popular actor. Accordingly, on the death of Syud Said in 1855, Syud Thoweynee—or Soweynee, for the 'th' and 's' in an Arab mouth are confounded in a sound between the two—laid claim to Syud Majid's dominions of Zanzibar, in addition to his own of Omān; and, backed by the tribes who wished to share in the sport, prepared to assert his claim by force of arms. At

[1] If Burton's spelling 'Seyyid' be not adopted in deference to Arabic analogy, it is the most eccentric of all.

the request of the Government of India, however, he abandoned his intention, and agreed to submit his claim to the arbitration of the Governor-General in Council. One of the most interesting state papers I have ever read is the resolution of the Governor of Bombay in Council, on the report of the Arbitration Commission, which was passed early in the year 1861. I commend it to those who desire precise information in small compass on the relations between Muscat and Zanzibar, which have now so important a bearing on the question of the East African slave trade.[1] All I have here to do is to note that the main claim of Syud Thoweynee was his recognition by the tribes of Omān as their Sultan, which in his and their view, constituted him, *de jure*, chief of that which had always been a dependency of Omān, namely Zanzibar.

Before this claim, and the arbitration thereupon, took place, an arrangement had been entered into between the brothers, by which Syud Majid was to be left in possession of his father's African dominions on payment to the ruler of Muscat of an annual sum of 40,000 crowns[2] (about 8,500*l.*). It is very important just now, that the real history of this 40,000 crowns should be known. It crops up in all discussions relative to the slave trade, and is usually considered to be, in some way, a stumbling-block between the English Government and their dealings with the Arab Governments in reference to the slave trade. There is no doubt, whatever, that the payment was agreed to between the rulers of Muscat and

[1] It is now published in the Parl. Rep. for 1871.
[2] Austrian dollars, worth about 4*s.* 2*d.*

Zanzibar, before they referred their disputes to the Indian Government.

After the payment was agreed to, the dispute seems to have arisen on the question whether it was a tribute from a dependent prince to his suzerain, or a friendly contribution from a rich brother to a poor one. 'There appears great reason to believe that the agent employed deceived both brothers, and'—here we meet the true Arab arrangement—'there certainly was no formal instrument declaratory of the precise nature of the grant.'

I gather, but it is not distinctly stated in the papers I have had an opportunity of consulting, that the Sultan of Zanzibar stopped payment when the dispute arose, and that this was the real point which drove Syud Thoweynee to take up arms. The result of the arbitration was the decision by Lord Canning in Council, given in April 1862, in these terms:—

'The annual payment of 40,000 crowns (Austrian dollars) is not to be understood as a recognition of the dependency of Zanzibar upon Muscat; neither is it to be considered as personal between Your Highness and your brother Syud $\frac{\text{Thoweynee}}{\text{Majid}}$; it is to extend to your respective successors, and is to be held to be a final and permanent arrangement, compensating the ruler of Muscat for the abandonment of all claims upon Zanzibar, and adjusting the inequalities between the inheritances derived from your father, his late Highness Syud Saeed, the venerated friend of the British Government, which two inheritances are to be henceforth distinct and separate.'

Thus much for the political relations between Omān, whose chief town the *Dryad* was on her way to visit, and the State of Zanzibar, which previously to 1855 formed an integral portion of it. I must now turn to the state of domestic policy within Omān itself.

Syud Thoweynee, being forty-one years of age in 1862, had a son, then of the age of twenty-three, named Salim. At a later date, but some time previous to my visit, Salim's ambition had been too much for him: he had murdered his father and forcibly possessed himself of his government. The Arab view of this proceeding was given to me at a later date by a pilot at Bushire. I was taking him off to the ship in my gig, and we got into conversation on the politics of the Gulf.

'Syud Said—werry good man—plenty big ship Syud Said—oh, werry good man. Syud Thoweynee, he werry good man, too. What for Salim kill him? Suppose one king want kill another king? All right, he kill it. Plenty man—Arab man—kill king. Suppose Arab man want kill another man? All right too—yes: oh, all right; suppose kill brother? all right. Plenty Arab man kill brother. Suppose Arab man kill father? no good; Arab man no kill father—plenty man no kill father; no good; Salim no good.' And, having arrived by a process like proving a proposition in Euclid, at his Q. E. D., my philosophical Arab subsided into silence in reflection over the 'no goodness' of 'His Highness.'

Salim had made capture of his uncle Syud Toorkee—whom we met at Bombay—and would no doubt

have made away with him also, but that the British Government stepped in and obtained his release, while they recognised the Government of Salim. In explanation of this it must be said there was no direct proof of murder, at any rate at first—and in any case as 'plenty Arab man kill king,' possibly England could not draw the fine distinctions of my friend the pilot.

Syud Toorkee made use of his liberty to get a force together for the dethronement of Salim, and he would have done it, but that the English again stepped in and carried off the former to Bombay, where, on a pension of, I believe, 1,800*l.* a year, we met him. The conditions of his pension, I understand, were, that while in receipt of it he should keep his hands off Muscat.

Salim, thus left in undisturbed possession, became at once unpopular. The Arabs thought him a coward, and that he wanted energy; and the little transaction relative to his father, was contrary to etiquette. There appeared a claimant to the throne in the person of Azān-bin-Ghes.

Azān, who had married Salim's sister, was the head of the elder branch of Syud Saïd's family, and he was supported generally by the Henavi tribes of Omān, while the Ghaffree tribes held aloof.

Said, Thoweynee, and Salim—though very good Mussulmans—except perhaps the latter—took religion in the good old country parson style. It was not to be pushed to extremes, as the Wahabees of the interior claimed—it was to be the assistant, not the master, of civil policy. But Azān-bin-Ghes was a priest, and a

reforming priest. He would be Imaum as well as Sultan; and would he not put the screw on some of those irreligious dogs who wore silk, and even smoked, under the rose?

Azān's progress was rapid and complete. He and his Henavis speedily possessed themselves of the town of Muscat. Salim shut himself up in his forts. Azān brought guns to bear; Salim did not like them, and, embarking in his ships, fled with his family and prime minister, one Hadji Achmet—represented as no better than he should be—to Bunder Abbas.

Thus Azān found himself master of Omān, and, at the date of our arrival at Muscat, was governing it as a true believer. When he was not at war, he was praying and preaching, or carrying on a crusade against silk and tobacco. But one thing was wanting to his security: namely, recognition by his powerful neighbour, the Indian Government: and this recognition was withheld, because a religious fanatic was infinitely more troublesome and dangerous at the head of the Arabs of Omān than a man of policy like Salim, even though he did happen to murder his father.

I have thought it well to give this slight but, I believe, correct sketch of the politics of Omān, because therein may be seen the sort of power we have to deal with in any forthcoming arrangements relative to slave-trading. The picture will serve equally well as the permanent condition of government in every petty Arab state which rests upon the shores of the Persian Gulf.

When we speak of 'treaties' with 'Arab States,' we

are referring to treaties with chiefs in constant course of displacement by force: whose people would rather than anything else in this world, go to war with someone; and whose eternal cry, either as nations, or as individuals is, 'Come and let us look one another in the face.'

It was to a more or less personal knowledge of this phase of human nature that we were proceeding in H.M.S. *Dryad*, at the time I speak of.

Our progress over the sea continued slow—infinitely slow—but not without strange sights. Here is one. It is what sailors call 'a flat calm;' there is not a ripple on the surface of the sea—which, however, is by no means glassy. It is covered over by a broken but vast extent of what is apparently bright red iron rust. Fished up and put under the microscope, the rust consists of myriads of minute globules, each being a kidney-shaped transparent sac, gathered in at one side, and connected inwards with a system of red objects exactly resembling the roe of a boiled lobster. The query with us in our ignorance is, did this give its name to the Red Sea? At night, the phosphorescence of this spawn, or whatever it may chance to be, is something astounding. It was to be observed, I daresay, a mile off, stretching away in broken patches of light. Looking down on it from the ship, you gazed into moonlight breaking through clouds, and involuntarily you turned your eyes upward, to see whether it were not such a reflected image which deceived you. It was not sparkling, changing, and disappearing phosphorescence, such as one commonly observes at sea, but

steady brilliant light. Fish flamed out of the water near us in tongues of blue fire; they leaped at a distance, and became flashes of noiseless musketry.

The marine slave trade was at times in violent activity all round us, and the unhappy victims to the wants of others fled and fled, yet never could fly fast enough, or far enough to escape. The Bonetas were in full chase, and the flying-fish rose in front of their pursuers like flights of sparrows, or kept sweeping up out of the water in gusts, like spray from the crests of waves, or snow drifts. Then the Bonetas leaped high and far after them—sometimes caught and swallowed them in mid air, but never ceased the pursuit, either in or out of the water.

Time goes on. We are weary of it, and steam. We are then 120 miles from Ras-el-Hadd, and 200 from Muscat. Next day we sight Ras-el-Hadd and the grandly picturesque outline of the Arabian coast. Then we turn our head directly for Muscat, and steam on.

We have not seen one drop of rain since the middle of September, a period of six months, but now, on this night, we rush into the midst of it. A furious thunderstorm rages in the air, the lightning flares rather than flashes—I count fifty-nine outbursts in one minute, of blinding brilliancy. The wind blows from all quarters in succession, and the rain sweeps in sheets across the ship. If the course of the ship were at all critical, we could not proceed in such weather, but though in the grand illumination, the peaks of the Arabian mountains show out fierce and rugged, and seem to overtop us,

we know our course is clear enough, and the screw thumps steadily on. Absolutely *apropos* of nothing, it was in the middle of this storm that I determined to amuse myself by throwing the rough notes, which I in common with most people make at sea of their experiences, into something of a connected narrative form. It was in the middle of the storm, in point of fact, that I began to write this book.

After clinging to us for many hours of darkness, the tempest either left us, or we left it, at daylight; and in a quiet and clear atmosphere we saw, miles off, for the first time, the wonderfully picturesque castles of Muscat. At first, as we draw near them, the idea of toy castles is irresistible. Every tower has its flag-staff, and every staff its white waving flag. One fully expects to see some practicable drawbridges and some flattened knights in the bluest armour, prancing motionless across them. The white flag is the sign of a subverted government, for Azān, as an ecclesiastic, has superseded the red flag of Syud Said, by the banner of the Church. In about four hours after first making out the forts, the *Dryad* lies, quietly rolling at anchor, in Muscat Cove. There is but one Englishman in Muscat, the British Political Agent, and he and I exchange the usual official visits, but the surgeon of the *Dryad* shakes his head when he sees him, and wishes he were safe in England. Poor fellow, he was even then falling a victim to his duty in such a climate.

Before the *Dryad* has been many minutes at anchor, and while I am busied at my writing table with some necessary papers, I hear a barefoot step entering my

cabin. Turning round, I behold a well-dressed Arab, just squatting down a yard on my right. He is fumbling in his dress with some ancient papers.

'Well?' say I.

'Salaam, Captain,' observes the visitor.

'What are you?' I enquire.

'Me, Mohammed—got papers,' and he hands the bundle to me. I find a variety of certificates as to his having supplied ships with provisions.

'You are a contractor, Mohammed, I suppose?'

'Salaam, Captain.'

'Then you had better go and see the Paymaster.'

'Salaam, Captain,' says Mohammed, and off he goes to the Paymaster with his bundle of certificates. They are found to be good, and Mohammed assumes the position of contractor to the ship at Muscat, and, further, agrees to accompany us in that capacity all over the Gulf. After this he is taller than he was before, he brushes past the rival but unsuccessful applicants who invade the upper deck, as though he did not see them; he swaggers in his gait, and glances round the *Dryad* with an air of satisfied ownership.

Mohammed-bin-Ahmed is a short, thick-set, intelligent-looking man with peculiarly small bright eyes. When he is not sobbing and clucking like a hen—his method of expressing sorrow and disgust—there is a peculiar cock in his eye as though he were enjoying some secret but most satisfactory joke. As we are anxious to learn what the feelings of the mercantile Arab populace of Muscat are, and what they think of Azān and his Government, Mohammed becomes to us

their mouth-piece. 'Well, Mohammed, so you have a new sultan, now?'—we have learnt to call it 'sooltahn' in these waters, and to put the accent on the last vowel generally in Arab names.

'Yesh,' says Mohammed, with his eye cocked, 'new sultan—Azān.'

'Well, and how do you like him?'

Mohammed is a little doubtful as to what he ought to reply. He pauses for a moment, at last he says:

'Azān, oh very good man, if you please, Azān. Plenty soldier—plenty mosque. Big padre, plenty Bible—he look out for God you know.'

'Who helps him? Some big man helps him you know—who helps him in Muscat?'

'If you please, Khuleelee and Saleh-bin-Ali—Khuleelee he very good man, big padre, plenty Bible. Saleh-bin-Ali—oh, he very good man—plenty soldier, high caste.

'How you like Azān, Mohammed?'

Mohammed cocked his eye still more, as in an under-tone he said:—

'You think Syud Toorkee come from Bombay? Oh, very good man Syud Toorkee.' Then, in a still lower tone. 'Bazaar, nobody smoke, Sir—suppose he smoke, Azān put him in chokee. Night smoke, yes, in house—Bazaar, nobody smoke—coffee drink—no wear him silk—no drink him grog—oh, very good man, Syud Toorkee.'

'Well,' say I, 'I think perhaps, suppose Syud Toorkee get money, he come Muscat—you think he beat Azān?'

Mohammed shook his head. 'Plenty soldier, Azān, very high caste.'

'But what Azān, Khuleelee, and Saleh-bin-Ali do, Mohammed? Suppose another man take your beef, who you go to?'

'S'pose you no ask Khuleelee, ask Azān; s'pose you no ask Azān, ask Saleh-bin-Ali.'

'Suppose, Mohammed, English man from ships, go ashore, drink grog, smoke—Azān stop him?'

'S'pose merchant captain send crew ashore—no drink grog. S'pose man drunk, send him off to ship—no smoke.'

'How many slave you got, Mohammed?'

Mahommed mistakes the drift of my enquiry—'Oh, very good man, Toorkee,' says the son of Ahmed.

At the time of my visit, Saleh-bin-Ali was away at Sur, endeavouring, so I understood, to raise the tribes against the Wahabees who were pressing—as they seemed everywhere to be pressing—on the frontier. Azān's government was not a bed of roses. The Ghaffree tribes had risen against him, espousing the cause of a chief whom Azān wished to dispossess. Yet, a few days before my arrival, the 'plenty soldier-ship' of Azān had been too much for them. One march from Muscat, he met and defeated his enemies, and took prisoners several of the chiefs. I saw two of these gentlemen in the forts; they did not look very happy, nor yet did they bemoan their fate; each was sitting in a separate part of the half ruinous building, on a heap of crumbling mortar, with a pig of ballast about two feet long before him, to each end of which his ankles wer

shackled by a strong iron ring. In this position they seemed pretty secure. In my company, on that day, as guide, was one Shaik Nasir, of the Al Harth tribe. A man with a beautiful face, and a manner in which dignity, simplicity, and grace were so blended, it was difficult to say which predominated. If it is possible to imagine an appearance directly opposed to the life of turbulence we knew he must be leading, Shaik Nasir possessed it. Had he been a David, I could have understood a Jonathan's love for him.[1]

In the then condition of Government, there were no official relations between the British Resident and Azān's Government. A diplomatic rupture had long subsisted, and such negotiations as were necessary for the safety of British interests, and the preservation of the maritime truce—of which we shall hear more soon—were carried on by an unofficial go-between; this was Shaik Nasir, and many a pleasant or painful talk the shaik and I took part in.

I have spoken of the Wahabees already as being always pressing outwards from the interior. In the short and dim view of their proceedings and policy which I obtained, they seemed to pull the strings in every Arab state in the Gulf, except in Omān; and it further seemed that Azān's braving their power was, for the ruler at Muscat, a new thing. Omān has long paid a tribute—under the form of an ecclesiastical tithe—to the Emir of Nejd, the Wahabee capital; but Azān, I believe, had declined to continue it. What struck me

[1] This may seem a strained simile, but on the shores of the Gulf, the voyager cannot escape from the Books of Samuel.

much was, that Azān, the man most opposed to the Wahabees, and their theological tenets, should have, in practical application, denounced chiefly the wearing of silk, and the smoking of tobacco, thereby manifesting the strongest outward signs, according to Palgrave, of Wahabeeism.

There is not on the face of the earth a more barren-looking coast than that of Arabia, and Muscat Cove is but an inlet into a group of red cinders. Nevertheless, fruits and vegetables are produced in profusion. How, one learns in the course of a very short walk towards the interior. The valleys, mere clefts in the burnt-up rocks, abound in springs of water, and wherever water exists, the disintegrated rock forms a soil of wonderful richness. In beds as small as ordinary hot-beds, abundance of melons, grapes, and other fruit, several kinds of table vegetables, barley, some wheat, and a little rice grow. The exports to Zanzibar, which are, as we know, partly returned in the form of slaves, are chiefly dates and dried fish. Time was in Omān in the days of the Portuguese, or before them, that it supported considerable silk manufactories, and mines were also worked in various places; but if the Arab be questioned touching these things, he says, 'God knows! It was some business in the days of the unbelievers!'

In one of the countries which receives the East African negro, it will be expected that the casual visitor should see some wretched indications of the miseries of the slave. For such, he will look in vain —at least on the surface. He meets, in all conditions

of life, a mixed population. He sees the handsome Arab gentleman, with no blood in his veins, which comes from further south than Abyssinia, the quadroon, the half-caste, and the pure negro. But as to being able to detect in manner, appearance, apparent condition, apparent stage of happiness or comfort, the difference between the freeman and the slave—this he has no power to do. I shall take occasion hereafter to quote those who are worth quoting as to the happy condition of the slave under an Arab master: I have here to say that I neither saw nor heard at Muscat of anything leading me to doubt the truth of these witnesses.

It is necessary for me to remark, before closing this chapter, that subsequently to my visit, Syud Toorkee, having raised the necessary funds, and received permission from the Indian Government, created a fresh revolution in Omān, defeated and slew his relative, ecclesiastical Azān, and is now at the head of that State, as the firm ally of Great Britain.

CHAPTER VII.

THE PERSIAN GULF.

In judging of the character of the chapters forming this book, the reader must always remember that Her Majesty's ships have other duties on the East Indian station, besides the suppression of the slave trade. It is very rarely that these special duties are altogether separate from the latter; yet it often happens that slave trade suppression becomes collateral to them, and this was the case with the *Dryad's* duties in the forthcoming cruise along the shores of the Persian Gulf. It may be thought by some, that a book carrying my title should deal exclusively with the capture of slave vessels. Such is not my view. A very material element—which can be omitted from no discussion of East African slave trade—is the special condition of things in the slave-owning and slave-trading countries, and the general conditions under which the traffic proceeds or is suppressed. Hence it follows that while the Naval officer in the Arabian or Southern Seas of the Indian Ocean may not be always dealing directly with the slave trade, his indirect action is continually at work in that behalf. Hence it further follows, that the reader can very rarely accompany me through any of

my sketches, without meeting a link directly connecting them with my title.

The main object of our visit to the Gulf, was 'to show the British flag;' yet the same orders necessarily contained a clause directing me to 'do my best to suppress the slave trade.' We shall see how we fared in the collateral, as well as in the main duty directed.

The process of 'showing the flag' in the Gulf, is a most important, if, being simply a visit to the different ports, it appears a simple one. Its connexion with the slave trade either is, or might be made, most direct. Without it, the Gulf would soon become a sea of blood and plunder.

Those who choose to dip into the evidence of the last Parliamentary Committee on the East African slave trade will find one very strong assertion by a very well qualified witness—General Rigby. 'Treaties with Arabs,' he says, 'are mere waste paper.' It follows that whatever is to be done with them must be done either by the exercise or the display of force. The constant visits of English men-of-war become such a display, and enable the Political officers of the Indian Government to deal with the Arab tribes by means of a small and occasional actual resort to force, with a commendable avoidance of 'waste paper.'

Along the Arabian shore of the Gulf there live a succession of tribes, and branches of tribes, Joasmees, Benyas, Utawbees, and so on, who are gathered round their respective chiefs in villages generally of barren aspect bordering on the sea. These tribes are—it appeared to me—at an eternal feud one with another.

They would spring, and they do spring, at each other's throats, whenever they have an opportunity; but the English Government have determined, in view of the safe commerce of the Gulf, that, by sea, war shall not exist. This is what is technically known as the 'maritime truce' amongst the tribes, which they are bound —not so much by treaty as by the simple threat of punishment—to maintain. No ardent Arab plunderer may rob his enemy's vessels on the sea. No chief may embark a force to attack the territory of another. Each tribe is an independent state; consequently Britain respects their independence and their right to make war on each other. But they must do it by land, not by sea. Peace is too precious a commodity on the water to be broken if force can prevent it; and the policy pursued in the Gulf is to show the British flag flying in a man-of-war, as a reminder to the Arab of our strength, and the certainty of his punishment should he offend us. The tribes are, on their seaboard, absolutely at our mercy, and to gain any particular end with them is only a question of how much force we shall employ. Behind every tribe, working secretly or openly, and intriguing with much ignorant craft, I always seemed to hear of the great Wahabee power of the interior. I gather from such documents as I have had access to, first that this has not always been so, and secondly, that it was on the increase. Rarely, I believe, is any considerable Wahabee force actually seen. Seldom does any disturbance arise without Wahabee influence.

I was not able to master the condition of things on the Persian shores of the Gulf. The towns there are

Arab, not Persian. Where their allegiance to the Shah begins, and where their action as independent states ends, I could not discover. The boundary was Arab, and therefore, perhaps, indefinable. Persia herself, I understood, in no way disturbed or threatened to disturb, the peace of the Gulf. She is not maritime; and though there is a high Government official at Bushire, bearing some such title as 'Admiral of the Seas,' it is an understood thing that his command does not extend beyond the shore.

Practically, the dominion of the vast coast-line bounding the inland sea, is in the hands of the 'Political Resident' in the Persian Gulf, who is appointed by the Indian Government and resides at Bushire, but moves from place to place as his presence may be needed. His supporters consist of Assistant Residents, some of whom reside at Bushire, and one at Bassiduh, or Bassadore, on the Island of Kism. His rule also extends over the Political Agent at Muscat, so far as the latter's political duties go, but does not extend to interference with his Consular or Vice-Admiralty acts, which are done under the Imperial, and not the Indian Government. The Resident at Bushire usually has an armed steam-vessel of the Bombay marine at his entire disposal, and Her Majesty's ships are directed to afford him every proper assistance.

No prince that ever reigned was more feared by his subjects, than was the gallant colonel who governed in my time, by the Arab tribes. If it was jokingly whispered in naval circles that the Resident only allowed a disturbance in the Gulf when he wanted a

little change of air and scene, the absurdity betokened our estimate of the force of his character, and his excellent political management. I have a right to say this, when some of the most interesting hours of an absorbingly interesting cruise, were spent in his company.

Matters of some importance in slave trade, as well as in other questions in these waters, are involved in the relations between Imperial Naval officers and the officials of the Indian Government; and I do not think its discussion here is out of place. I believe that formerly the ships of the Indian navy were placed, as the ships of the Bombay marine now are, absolutely under the orders of Political officers of a certain rank with whom they were brought into contact. The Imperial Naval officer takes no 'orders' except from his professional seniors. In dealing with Diplomatic officers all the world over, the Naval officer is alone responsible for the employment of the forces placed under his command. If that employment be wrong, he may plead the 'opinion' of the Diplomat, but not his direction. And, unless distinctly contrary orders from his professional superior be given to him, the Naval officer is justified in acting or refusing to act, whatever be the opinion of the Diplomatic Agent. An excellent rule of this kind becomes a safeguard against the hasty or unwise employment of force, and in dealing with civilised countries on a large scale, such a distinction between the functions of the Diplomatic and Military officers of the State is fully recognised and approved.

But the Indian Political officer, dealing with small

States only half civilised, is an executive as well as a diplomatic officer. Within his jurisdiction he does not say, 'I will represent your conduct'—the conduct of an offending chief—'to my Government and request instructions.' He says, 'You shall not do so and so, and *I* will prevent it,' or 'You have done so and so, and *I* will punish you for it.' Hence, the placing a force absolutely under his control is generally considered essential; and it is supposed some danger lies in the chance that the Imperial Naval force may be withheld at a critical time by the legitimate will of its commander.

The Naval argument on the other side is, first, that the rule leaving the responsibility of action on his shoulders is, even for these small States, a good one; that it will cause the Political officer to pause in an application for a force which may be withheld; and that means may in consequence be found to effect the object in some other way. Further, he declares that the real danger is the opposite, for that the Naval officer, especially the comparatively young one who deals with these cases, is burning to employ his force on any good pretext, and that it will never be withheld, unless its employment be glaringly injudicious.

The Indian Political officer would reply that, even were this so, the separate action brought about by separate responsibility, between the Political and Naval officer in the same waters, must conduce to confusion. The Naval answer here would be that in Political matters there would be no separate action, because the Naval officer has, invariably, distinct orders for all

proper co-operation with the Political officers with whom he is brought into contact officially; and he would receive the censure of his superiors for any contrary course, unless a clearly defined, purely Naval duty brought it about.

There is one purely Naval duty very likely to bring this about in the Persian Gulf; I mean the suppression of the slave trade.

I have defined roughly in my third chapter, the powers delegated to the Naval officer for the suppression of this trade. I must here draw some attention to their possible action in the Gulf, and to some difficulties which surround them.

As I have before observed, the traffic by sea, in slaves for sale, except during four months in the year, is legal in the waters of the Sultan of Zanzibar. One would suppose, on the first blush of the matter, that as the exception was a grant by the Sultan—not a treaty stipulation—the waters of other slave-owning nations of similar character would be open for such traffic all the year round. I have pointed out that in the Persian Gulf it is not so. Persian slaves, domestic or otherwise, cannot be legally transferred by sea without passes. No slaves whatever can under any conditions be legally carried by Arab vessels in the waters of the Gulf; and any ships carrying them are liable to capture by the captain of any man-of-war who meets them and chooses to exercise his powers, unless they be within the territorial waters of Persia.

The treaty with the Arab tribes runs in these terms: 'The carrying off slaves, men, women, or

children from the coasts of Africa and elsewhere, or the transporting them in vessels, is plunder and piracy, and the friendly Arabs shall do nothing of this nature.'

This was a treaty drawn up in 1820, which is at this moment the authority for the Naval officer's action in the Persian Gulf. Coupling the words of this treaty with that providing for passes being carried by sea-borne Persian slaves, and without further modifying instructions, he would be bound to seize all Arab vessels carrying slaves not engaged in working the ship, whenever he met them out of territorial waters—that is, even under the more recent instructions issued to the officers, and noticed in my third chapter.

It is only reasonable to suppose that what we find officially recorded in 1844, as to the final disposal of slaves in the Gulf, must be going on now. There is no material alteration of treaty to prevent it, and the slaves still go up to the north. Slaves must be carried about and across the Gulf for sale, just like any other merchandise.

Putting these two things together, we shall see, either that the ships must abstain from interference with the Gulf slave trade, or attack it with the risk of upsetting the Resident's policy.

Although the Political Agents in the Gulf are fully alive to the importance of suppressing the slave trade there, yet they must also be still more alive to the troubles which such action would cause them. Colonel Pelly has written of 'the intense hatred which our destruction of Arab property on the East Coast of

Africa, in prosecution of our anti-slavery proceedings, had induced in the Arab mind;'[1] and no one can doubt how much such hatred would be increased when they saw their property destroyed at their doors. Under such circumstances, slave trade suppression in the Gulf would become the only mission of the Resident there, if he attempted it at all. Being but one branch—if it be a branch—of his duties, he must practically neglect it in view of very much larger considerations.

On the other hand, the independent jurisdiction which the Naval officer commanding a ship in the Gulf may feel himself called on to exercise, might at any moment destroy the Resident's plans, and bring about all those troubles which it is the aim of his office to avoid. The exasperation of the Arab tribes might become desperate; they might fly in revenge to their old plunder and piracy. Commerce would disappear for the time, and the numerous British Indian subjects who throng the Coast towns in pursuit of trade would lose their fortunes, if they did not lose their lives.

Such appear to me the contingencies possibly following existing relations between the Naval officer who proceeds to the Gulf armed with the usual instructions to suppress the slave trade, the Political Resident, and the actual trade. It is time now to proceed to my narrative.

Most of the Arab forts which I have seen—those of Arab build I mean, and not such as exist at Muscat of Portuguese origin—are of a singularly imposing

[1] Report &c. to Bombay Government, 1866, p. 7.

character, when viewed from any distance. Birkah, a square massive block, of Roman simplicity, is one of the first we pass on our way. As a point in Omān politics it is important enough; but we need not stop here or elsewhere on the Muscat side of Cape Mussendom. Our way lies direct to Hormuz Island, which we propose to visit, if only for an hour. On the second evening after leaving Muscat, and after a succession of roaring thunderstorms, we anchored there and found ourselves surrounded by the ruins of a vast civilisation.

We lay close under an immense strongly-built ruined fort, and we could see for miles along the low shores, and towards the brilliantly pink and white mountain-range some three miles inland, the outlines of what was once a populous city, the emporium of Eastern trade.

'If all the world were a golden ring, Hormuz would still be the pearl in it,' was the Persian saying in the days of the island's prosperity: now, only a few mat huts abutting on the wall of the fort, and inhabited by one or two families of fishermen, connect it with the land of the living.

The town, originally founded by an Arab conqueror in the ninth century, was brought to its full height of prosperity by the Portuguese; and its death-blow was struck by the English and Persians together, in the early part of the seventeenth century. 'The English,' says the traveller Gemelli in 1694, 'for lending their ships to the King of Persia to conquer Ormuz, which the Dutch refused to do, had half the customs of

Comeron (Gombroon?) which they also exchanged for 1,880 tomans a year. True it is, Syud Abbas promised the English great matters to induce them to join their sea to his land forces for reducing the fortress of Ormuz; but he kept not his word, and only gave them half the customs, as aforesaid, for betraying Christianity.'[1] In these old Portuguese days at Hormuz, persons from all parts of the globe exchanged their commodities, and 'transacted their business with an air of politeness and attention seldom seen in other places of trade.' Where we saw but the outlines of streets and squares, a thronging multitude had paced in days not so very long ago, sheltered by linen awnings from the fierceness of the sun. Surrounded by Indian cabinets, and vases filled with flowering shrubs, treading on soft carpets, and lulled by Eastern music 'in its highest perfection,' the merchant carried on his negotiations. 'Universal opulence and extensive commerce, a refined luxury, politeness in the men, and gallantry in the women, united all their attractions to make this city the seat of pleasure.' Yet with all this Ormuz was 'the driest island in the world, for there is nothing growing on it, but only salt.'

On visiting the plateau of the fort, I found immense water tanks, with fresh water in them in plenty. They were in perfect repair, and with their arched and groined roofs supported on heavy pillars appeared like the crypts of some great cathedral. From the tower of the fort we had a good view of the surrounding plain, and could well trace the marks of the splendour which

[1] Churchill's Voyages, vol. iv. p. 171.

BUNDER ABBAS, FROM THE SEA.

was gone. Out into the sea, on both sides of the peninsula which the fort terminated, ran the foundations of old warehouses, streets and squares, as far as the eye could stretch inland, even to where the red and white pinnacles of the mountains closed the view and the plain together. The round tower, minaret or lighthouse, whose object is, I believe, now unknown, stood out in sad loneliness; and further away the ruins of the cathedral of Santa Lucia seemed to try to bear it company. The pink and white of the mountains was so rich in colour that, wishing to know whence it proceeded, we walked to their base, and saw for the first, perhaps for the last time in our lives, salt take the place of granite.

Mohammed, who accompanied us, and who had been sobbing considerably over the ruin he saw everywhere round him, could here contain himself no longer. He sat down on a boulder of salt, and began to cry. It was some time before we could discover the cause of his distress; but we found that the idea of so much salt, and no means of selling it, was too much for him.

From our anchorage at Hormuz, we looked across some ten or twelve miles to Bunder Abbas, better known to the reader of 'The Fire-Worshippers,' as Gombroon. It shows to us as a yellow patch of houses, close down to the sea, shut in by burnt-up slopes of sand and rock, the landscape being terminated by a distant range of mountains gorgeously coloured by the sinking sun.

To Bunder Abbas we went next morning, and found ruin here also, but of a later date. Succeeding to the

trade of abandoned Hormuz, Gombroon for a time held up its head. The ruins of large factories show that it did so, but for long years it has been shrunk up to the dimensions of an ordinary Arab town.

At the time of our visit its political condition was doubtful. It may be remembered how Syud Salim, after being driven out of Muscat by Azān, fled with Hadji Ahmed by sea. It was to Bunder Abbas he wended his way, for the town, though he pays tribute to the Shah of Persia for it, owns the rule of the Sultan of Muscat. It was now said that Salim had disgusted even his immediate family, who would have nothing more to say to him, and had fled to the Island of Kism, also an appanage of Muscat. Hadji Ahmed, on the other hand, had made hay while the sun shone, and entering into terms with Persia on his own account, had received in reward the governorship of Bunder Abbas, now resumed by Persia. Salim himself, we learnt, was at Debay, an Arab town on the west side of Cape Mussendom, under the protection of its chief. Hadji Ahmed was at Shirāz.

While our main duty was performed by simply anchoring, and perhaps visiting and being visited by the local authorities, the collateral duty, suppression of the slave trade, must not be forgotten.

There were at anchor several dhows of the usual class; but we were of course aware that most of the shipping belonging to the place must have been then at Zanzibar.

If Bunder Abbas were considered to be Persian at the moment, and an undoubted case of slave-trading in an

Arab vessel had been brought before me, I could do nothing, for the waters were territorial. If, on the other hand, Bunder Abbas were not considered to have changed hands, but to be still Arab, then I had by treaty full right over any Arab vessel caught trading in slaves.[1] But if such a vessel claimed to be Persian, although she might offer no proof, yet as the onus would lie on me to prove the contrary, she could not be interfered with. Only in the case where it was certain that the vessel was Arab, and the place not Persian, could I take those steps towards the suppression of the slave trade which are expected.

But there was no reason why I should not in a friendly way, so to speak, ascertain what I could relative to the slave trade; and accordingly the dhows at anchor were, by permission of the local authorities, boarded and examined. In one of them was a negro child, too small for anything but sale. Her master claimed her to be a Persian vessel, but gave no satisfactory account of the child. I cannot doubt for one moment that this was an instance of a slave for sale as part cargo, nor can I doubt that this single occurrence would justify my summary at the commencement of this chapter. Of course I took no steps with such a case, as the vessel was fully protected by her claim. Bunder Abbas is no doubt one of the ports of entry for slaves to Persia, and I do not know whether the Shah has now resumed it, or whether it belongs to Syud Toorkee.

Our next halting place was to be Bassiduh, or Bassadore, on the west end of the Island of Kism, and we

[1] Assuming that it were originally Arab, which is doubtful.

shipped a pilot at Bunder Abbas. He came on our bridge provided with a piece of carpet and a lemon; the former was for his prayers when the hour arrived, the latter he stealthily turned over in his hands the whole time he was with us. Mohammed does the interpreting between Mr. H——, myself, and the pilot, and takes to himself immense credit in consequence. By the way, his contractorship did not turn out a success at Bunder Abbas, as I was made aware the evening before we left.

Many of us had been for a boyish scamper on donkey back, and I had had several most successful tumbles out of a saddle apparently constructed for that purpose, but when it was time to re-embark, the wind had somewhat risen, and a surf high enough to wet everyone thoroughly, existed as we took boat. Mohammed had been left to come off later with the eatables we supposed he would purchase.

Somewhat tired after the day, I was dozing over a book and a glass of wine in the evening, when I became aware that Mohammed, in a dripping state, was sitting on the deck at my feet.

'Well, Mohammed, what's the matter now? Are you wet?'

Mohammed began to sob.

'What has happened, Mohammed?'

'Oh, Bunder Abbas, Bunder Abbas, Bunder Abbas,' he replies.

'What about Bunder Abbas?'

'Bunder Abbas, Bunder Abbas, oh no good, no good, Bunder Abbas!'

And for some time I could get no more out of him.

But I ultimately gathered that his speculation had been so far unsatisfactory, that prices had ranged higher than he expected, and that he had been rolled over in the surf as a climax. I never saw a moral struggle better counterfeited than Mohammed's over the glass of sherry I pressed upon him to keep the cold out. He cocked his eye at it, shook his head at it, and finally got his hand within an inch or two of it, but at last, as by a superhuman effort, tore himself from it, and muttering between his sobs, 'Bunder Abbas, Bunder Abbas,' disappeared.

At Bassadore we came across ruin again, but of a still later stage. It had been the Gulf head-quarters of the Indian navy in its day, and the roofless bungalows attested the end of that service. I do not think I ever saw a barer place, nor did I ever see a building less likely on an outside inspection to produce a pair of English ladies, than the Assistant Residency at Bassadore. Yet they were there, and seemed to enjoy it. The settlement is nothing but a few rough mud huts on a plain some twenty feet above the sea; yet, bare as it looks, the Island of Kism produces most things demanded of it, one surprising commodity being excellent milk from cattle nourished on salt fish and dates.

We make some attempt to coal at Bassadore; but as a 'Shemāl,' the north wind of the Gulf, is blowing, we break down mid-way, and have to start for Bushire with half our requirement.

Just opposite Bassadore is the Arab town of Lingeh;

we passed it by, and proceeded northwards, but, as the wind grew stronger, we ultimately turned back, and anchored off Lingeh for the night.

Wherever we have wandered since coming within sight of land at Ras-el-Hadd, small Arab dhows, one or two at a time, have been our constant companions. Were slave trade suppression our only duty, probably we should have boarded and examined every one. But our time in the Gulf is very limited, and slave trade suppression must, for the present, be only lightly touched. We should not think of troubling ourselves with any vessel met at sea, unless there were something to arouse our suspicions. Nor, at seven o'clock in the morning after our leaving Lingeh, did I observe anything suspicious in a dhow coming down towards us before the north wind against which we were steaming. We were off another Arab town, named Mogoo, but it was several miles distant on our right, being at the head of a bay.

I go down off the bridge to dress, thinking not at all of the vessel running towards us, and am in all the delights of 'a tub' when I hear a step, and the door of my dressing-cabin knocked at.

'Well?'

'That dhow, Sir,'—the voice is that of the officer of the watch—'that you saw ahead, has hauled right up for the shore.'

I know there is nothing but beach abreast of the dhow, no port and no anchorage.

'Are you sure?'

'Yes, Sir, quite sure.'

'Very well then. Have a boat prepared, and an officer with the interpreter—and a couple of rifles ready to bring her to. I shall be up directly.'

Boat, officer, interpreter, and rifles, were all ready when I reached the bridge. Where is the dhow?

There is not a doubt of the fact that she is making for the shore, but the wind has failed somewhat, so a little more steam and a little turn towards her, soon cause us to close.

'Lower the boat, and fire a couple of rifles to bring her to.' It is an understood thing amongst us, that all dhows immediately lower their sails when fired over. Two blank rifles are fired; no result. 'Fire a couple of ball ahead of her—and be careful now.'

The rifle shot plunge just the other side of the vessel's stem. Her single sail remains untouched, and her course, straight for the nearest point of land, remains unaltered. The wind, however, has almost entirely failed, and the ship is close to her.

She is a little crazy vessel of the unvarying form, and we can see has a crew of some eight or ten men. Our boat boards her, and after a pause comes back with an Arab (her captain), a full-grown negro, and a small negro boy.

No one on board, perhaps, is quite cognisant of the 'domestic slave' question at this time, and I fancy the full-grown negro is thought very suspicious.

I am, as I think and hope, fully conscious of my powers, and what compulsion is put on me in their exercise, and I do not like the look of things at all.

If I have to act in this matter, my way must be clear

beforehand, for an appeal is possible from the Persian Government against any action I take. We are not more than five miles from the shore, and the waters may be construed into territorial waters, though they are not. I cause such steps as are possible, to be taken against the contingency, and then I am ready for my unfortunate Arab, who I sincerely wish could have gone on in his vessel like any other.

The boarding-officer's report is: 'The dhow belongs to Hassein on the Arabian coast; he cannot make out whither she is bound; and the slave boy has asked to be taken out of the hands of the Arabs.'

The boy's story is that he is the last of several who were brought over from the Arabian coast and have been gradually sold off at ports further north. He tells us that the vessel saw us the night before, that is, before we put back to Lingeh; that she was afraid to proceed, and anchored for the night; that, supposing us to have passed up, she this morning left her anchorage, and did not see us at first, but that when she did, the crew immediately determined to run the vessel on the beach. The proceeds of sales, he informed us, were stowed away in the ballast of the dhow, and he begged he might be kept on board the man-of-war.

The captain was now called up.

'To what place did his vessel belong?'

'Hassein,' pointing at the same time towards the Arabian side of the Gulf.

'Where was he from?'

'Debay.'

'Where was he bound to?'

'Mogoo,—down the coast, various places.'

'Ask him to say it again.'

'Mogoo.'

'Why, if he intended going to Mogoo, was he standing away from the place, when the wind was fair for it?'

'The wind was not good—the tide was very bad. He was not going to Mogoo.'

'Then where was he going?'

'Down the coast; various places.'

'But there was nothing except beach for miles along shore, towards which he was standing for when boarded. How does he make it out?'

'The wind was very bad. Very bad tide. Was not going to Mogoo.'

'Why was he making for the beach?'

'Does not know.'

'Ask him why he did not lower his sail when fired over?'

'Does not know—frightened.'

Something follows to the interpreter aside.

'What does he say?'

No answer. But I am told presently that he has said,

'Tell the Captain I'll give him something to let me go.'

'Ask him how he accounts for the slave boy?'

'Does not belong to him—knows nothing about him, belongs (apparently) to various people and places. He is not his master.'

'What about the negro man?'

'Part of the crew.'

'Ask him again, to what place does the dhow belong?'

'Hassein.'

'Ask him again where he was going?'

'Does not know—down the coast.'

'Tell him, I am afraid I must take his dhow.'

'Would the Captain take half to let him go?'

'Tell him, I am afraid I must take his dhow.'

'Inshallah!'

My unfortunate Arab will not get himself out of the hobble he is in. I try him in many ways. I go over the ground again and again, but cannot get the excuse I look for. I must put the law in force against the unfortunate vessel, and as there is not a 'port of adjudication' nearer than Bombay—1,000 miles off—and the craft is little better than a crazy barge, I must execute her on the spot.

The thing is done. The word has gone forth and the dhow must die, either for her actual sins, or for the evidence which is so presented as to show her sinful. The Arab crew, permitted to take all they claim as their personal effects, are further given their choice as to their disposal. They choose to be landed at Hussineh, a town some six or seven miles off, and leave us. There is no sign of passion on their faces as they go—it is the will of Heaven. Yet if the will of Heaven should allow of a convenient opportunity for turning the tables, then ——?

There was little of use in the wretched vessel, except the money mentioned by the slave boy, so the culprit

was soon prepared for execution. Set on fire in several places, and scuttled simultaneously, she first blazes into flame, and then suddenly plunges heavily down to the bottom of the Persian Gulf.

It was my first experience of this legal destruction, and I cannot say I regarded it with any feeling of satisfaction. I remember that I did not quite kill the first rabbit I ever shot, and had to put the animal out of pain at close quarters. As I saw my first work of dhow-destroying consummated, I recalled very forcibly my sensations respecting that first rabbit.

It is all over. A single cubical water tank floating corner-ways, and some charred planks, alone remain of the unfortunate illicit trader, and we proceed on our way to Bushire.

If the locality is not well known to the general reader, it should be, as the chief, if not the only Persian port. Like every other town I saw on the Persian coast, it is a mass of rough square yellow buildings, of sun-dried clay, brick, and stone; with choked-up streets and ruinous archways, everything falling to pieces, or if under repair at one end, then crumbling at the other. But the place was Persian and not Arab, that was apparent on the face of things; and the remembrance I have of the people is that they were as graceless as the Arabs were graceful.

Under the hospitable wing of the Political Resident, and mounted on a frisky Arab horse—whose views of our mutual relations differed from mine, and were in the ascendant—I visited Sebzabad, a point some miles out of the town, where the Resident's country-house is

situated. Here again, we were amid the ruins of a still more ancient civilisation. The cuneiform marked bricks lay about, as unheeded as they were common, and yet one trod softly over them, displaying an involuntary reverence for the past.

From the very incongruity of the thing, the Resident's country-house struck me much. It had been built by a sailor—an officer of the Indian navy—on the ground where, in times gone by, Alexander's fleets are said to have moored.

In his architecture, this officer, strong in his ruling passion, had made every preparation for bad weather. All the doors had scuttles in them, every shelf had a cant piece, and every door-sill had a 'combing' necessary to step over into the next room. He might have gone to sea in his house with great comfort and security against rolling.

I must not dwell over Bushire, for there is other matter in hand, and we are off to Bahrein with one of the Assistant Residents on board, in a very few days.

Bahrein is so fruitful an island, that its sovereignty has caused many a fight in the Gulf, and no doubt will cause many more. As I painted a rapid picture of political life at Muscat, I wish now to do the same for Bahrein, in order that the general reader may form some further notion of the condition of these Arab tribes, with whom we make grave slave-trading treaties, and as gravely ask whether they are adhered to.

On our arrival at the chief town, Manameh, we found the Banians—the British Indian merchants who carry on most of the trade of the Gulf—in a state of

panic. One merchant forced a bag of silver into my boat the moment she touched the shore, and it was further proposed to transfer the whole of the British property, amounting in value to several lakhs of rupees, for safe custody to the ship. Had our arrival not changed their views, they were further prepared to take shipping in a body and be off.

The immediate cause of all this 'to do' was as follows:

Mohammed-bin-Khalifah, ex-chief of Bahrein, and elder brother of the present shaik, Ali-bin-Khalifah, had been dispossessed and driven out by the British in the previous September for sufficient reasons. At the earnest request of Ali, his brother the ex-shaik was allowed to return, and to reside at Manameh as a subject. Once there, he never ceased intriguing to plot himself back into his brother's position, and his supporters were two chiefs on the mainland, Mubareck-al-Abdoolah, and Rashid-bin-Muselim, who in their turn were mere tools of Abdoolah-bin-Feysul, the chief of the Wahabees in Central Arabia.

The plans of these confederate chiefs being ripe, Mohammed-bin-Khalifah had quitted Manameh, intending to return as a foe, and had, a few days before our arrival, sent a polite message to the Banians to secure their goods out of harm's way. It was further said that the point of embarkation from the mainland would be Khor Hassān, not far off; that Rashid-bin-Muselim had collected there the necessary flotilla, and that his forces, if not already afloat, were in a fair way to be so.

Ali-bin-Khalifah had meantime made such show of

defence as he could; but the dread of the Wahabees on one side, and of the British on the other, paralysed his action, and prevented him from arresting the open allies and agents of Mohammed, even in Manameh.

The *Dryad's* arrival put a better face on things. Ali took heart of grace and arrested the two chief agents of Mohammed; and this done, the Banians resumed their confidence and their trade. It was understood that, unless the stories about Khor Hassān were true, Mohammed would put off his projected attack for a season.

As our interest centred on this latter place, we quitted Bahrein, and, arriving at our destination the next morning, found that, though the flotilla was there, and those destined for it were actually embarked, the preparations were not of the character, nor were their objects such as had been represented.

Khor Hassān—a few houses and huts on a waste of sea-shore—was inhabited by the Izzbissa tribe, whose chief, about this period, found himself in a very awkward predicament. He was very rich in dhows, and Rashid-bin-Muselim, as described, wanted the loan of them for purposes of his own. If the chief of Khor Hassān lent them, and the descent on Bahrein took place, the English would be apt to inquire the reason why, and Khor Hassān would suffer for the breach of the maritime truce. If, on the other hand, he refused them, he must be prepared to account for the refusal to Rashid, and to the Wahabees at his back.

After very mature deliberation, the people of Khor Hassān came to the conclusion that discretion counselled

flight. When we reached the place, chief, people, property, down to the very roofs of the houses, were shipped on board the fleet of dhows, and sovereign and subjects proposed to transport their kingdom and join it on to that of one Mohammed-bin-Thani, who lived in another collection of huts on another waste of sea-shore, some sixty or eighty miles down the coast. We did not wait to see the start, but I have no doubt they carried out their very sensible intention.

I may conclude the story by saying that at a later period Mohammed-bin-Khalifah put his plans into execution, carried Manameh, and slew his brother Ali.

In punishment, the usurping chiefs were attacked by an English force in the following November. They were deposed, and I believe, are now lodged in safe custody in India, the kingdom of Bahrein being conferred on a son of the late Shaik Ali. Such is another phase in the political state of the countries where the negro finds his ultimate resting-place.

I had before heard something of Mohammed-bin-Thani, and this move on the part of the Khor Hassān people towards his sheltering arm was so much in accordance with what I had heard, that it determined me to pay a visit to Wukra, for so his town was named.

I find I have noted the general aspect of towns on the Arabian side, as a low line of sand, a rather higher clump of squarish-looking buildings, some date trees, and the sky. On the Persian shore, a background of mountain comes before the sky, but that is all the difference. Wukra bore out the former character exactly, and before many minutes

were past after our arrival, Mohammed, with his second in command, made off to visit us.

They were a pair of dried-up old gentlemen, not wanting in grace or dignity, but with a sort of suppressed jocularity in their manner, which accorded well with the part Mohammed was said to be playing.

Each chief was totally blind of one eye—a common thing on these shores—but Mohammed was fast losing sight of the other.

I had been told that, not so long ago, this chief was one of the most piratical old firebrands to be found in the Gulf, and had given infinite trouble to the Political Resident. Blindness coming on, put an effectual stop to his personal leadership, and he turned it to account by announcing that, being a friend of the British and of peace, he would no longer countenance rapine. Henceforth, he and the British together would put it down, with a strong hand if necessary. Meantime he would extend his protection to all oppressed ones, and Wukra, protected by the alliance with the English, should shelter all who sought its asylum.

I understood that this policy was really making him very powerful, and I could not doubt it after what I saw at Khor Hassān. During our interview we spoke to him of this, and of the state of affairs at Bahrein, and it was quite edifying to hear Mohammed's mourning over the wickedness of mankind. He seemed much more like a prophet denouncing judgment against a nation, than a retired pirate with his thirst for the sport unslaked.

But we soon found there was something much nearer his heart at the moment than even piracy.

'Would the Hakem do something for his eyes?'

But here the second chief broke in,

'It was to be hoped that he might have a share in whatever doctoring was toward.'

Well, the surgeon was always good-natured, and after a while sent up a blister and a dose of medicine. We supposed, in the surgeon's absence, that the dose belonged to Mohammed, and the blister to the second chief, and were in the midst of a reverent crowd of Arabs, putting it on the latter's forehead, when the surgeon arrived and told us we were putting it on the wrong man. Mohammed, who had been peering over at the operation with a kind of woe-begone curiosity, instantly brightened, and held out his temple for the transfer. But the second chief, who did not at first understand what was being done, seemed ready to cry with vexation.

'What,' said he, 'is there no blister for me?'

'None for you—it was a mistake. You are to have the dose.'

From his mere action, and the contemptuous way in which he swallowed his medicine, one could quite well understand he was saying—which he was in effect—

'Dose indeed! what's a dose compared to a blister?'

Politics were quite over when medicine came on the stage. Mohammed was too charmed with his blister, and his second too chagrined at the loss of it, to talk or think of anything else.

'Just think,' observed the second chief to me, 'just

think of the condition of things when I reach the shore. Mohammed with a blister, and I with none! what will the people say?'

I am afraid—this appeal seemed so well founded—that we tried to induce the surgeon to put aside the rights of the case, and please the second with a ditto to that bestowed on Mohammed; but he was obdurate, and the interview came to a close, leaving the second chief unsatisfied. He turned to me at the last moment as he passed over the side.

'It is the last chance. *Won't* you give me a blister before I go?'

But I did not, and the chief passed sadly out of sight blisterless.

From Wukra we went quite down to the south-west corner of the Gulf, where we visited Said-bin-Khalifah, chief of Abouthabi, without any exception the finest male specimen of humanity I have ever seen. Either the artist or the photographer should visit these regions, and preserve to us types of that outward grandeur to which the race is capable of ascending, before we are all utterly subdued and toned down to the physique which becomes a white tie and a tail coat.

Abouthabi, pronounced 'Abŏtheby,' is a power in Gulf politics. Its chief can bring 4,000 fighting men into the field, although their drinking water must come from Debay, fifty miles off.

It was here I first heard in distinct terms of Wahabee proceedings. Said told us that Sedeyree, the Wahabee emissary, was then at Shargeh, a place close to Debay, with only some dozen followers; and that he

was exercising his assumed powers in the deposition of the chief of Shargeh, and the substitution of another. The strange part of the matter, as showing at once the daring and the real power of this curious agglomeration of tribes, whose cohesiveness is ostensibly sectarian, was that the inland fortress of Bereymah was the nearest point from which Sedeyree could claim assistance, and it was 200 miles from Shargeh.

I wished to see the ex-sultan of Muscat, and went next to Debay for that purpose. He paid me a visit, and in him I thought I saw the least prepossessing Arab I had yet met with. If I had not known he had murdered his father; his appearance would have made me think him capable of it. He was of course good-looking, but his face was not honest or open. There was no generous fire in it. His large lips drooped, and he lisped in his speech. He would have fought no one fairly in the open, but woe betide him who stood in his way, and in his power. He was tall and well-formed; plainly but well-dressed of course, but his gait wanted in dignity—he rather sauntered. The chief of Debay, who accompanied him to the ship, was his complete opposite. A little sturdy, pugnacious, open-faced blusterer, charmed to have it out with you by land or sea in a friendly way, but if that could not be, equally charmed to shake hands with you. On the face of matters, it was clear that Syud Salim, ex-sultan of Muscat, was the merest instrument in the little blusterer's hands. He had taken him up for the

present, and would drop him when the time came. But of this Salim seemed quite unaware.

Hitherto, I had had no lack of interpreters on board; but at Debay we had to fall back on Mohammed, our contractor, who deeply felt the importance of the position. As I have often marked the advantage of giving the exact language used on certain occasions, I mean to do it here in reference to our talk with Syud Salim. Several of the officers are present with us, and all are seated except Mohammed, who is in the presence and stands—Salim is on my left, in Arab fashion. Coffee (in egg-cups), and sherbet are handed in due form. Salim uses some words to Mohammed, which to me are verbal hieroglyphics. I should observe, by the way, that some very perturbing influence is evident on the minds of both chiefs, but we do not at first know what it is.

Mohammed to me. 'If you please, sir, thish king—yes, Sir—thish king, shpeak, say: You one very good man.'

I to Mohammed. 'Will you tell him I think he one very good man, too.'

Mohammed translates.

Mohammed. 'He shpeak—want to know have you heard the news?'

I. 'What news? we have heard none.'

Mohammed translates, and it is quite clear that the perturbation is conveyed to his own mind by what Salim tells him.

Mohammed. 'If you please, thish king shpeak—say, kill him Sedeyree last night.'

I. 'What?'

Mohammed. 'Shpeak—kill him Sedeyree last night at Shargeh—kill him all his soldier. Yes, sir: kill him Sedeyree.'

We are not used to be in the thick of this murder, and are all startled.

'Good gracious, Mohammed, ask him how it happened?'

Mohammed, after conference. 'Catch him in one room, you savey—that shaik—old shaik, Sedeyree, new shaik—all in one room. Sedeyree men all one room too. Then Shargeh men come and shoot him there.'

This was the fact. Sedeyree had fallen a victim to his temerity, and the only survivor of his party was his younger brother. Several of the officers visited the place on our anchoring at Shargeh next morning. It appeared that the townspeople, rebelling against the Wahabee dictation, had surrounded the house where they all were, and shot them down through the windows and openings. Sedeyree himself, at the first fire, had fallen on the old shaik with intent to destroy him, but the younger brother of the assailant clung to him and prevented the blow. A shot from without then destroyed the elder brother in the younger's arms. The officers saw this chief in confinement, where the scene was enacted. He was even then dashed with his brother's blood, and the walls and floor were covered with the same evidence of outrage. Poor young Sedeyree was in sad grief, and expressed great thankfulness to the officers who commiserated his condition.

Syud Salim at Debay was assured of ultimate

success against Muscat; but I saw enough to convince me he was deceived on all sides, and never could put his plans into execution.

At Debay the Surgeon and I had the opportunity of seeing the pearl fishery in progress. The water was shallow, and the negro divers brought up fish not larger than native oysters. We timed them in diving and found that they did not exceed sixty seconds below water, gathering, in that time, some dozen or so of the oysters in a basket. The practice was to allow the oysters to rot on the beach and then to collect the pearls from the midst of the putrid mass. All the pearls I saw here were insignificant, nor did I elsewhere in the Gulf see them of any size or beauty.

The visit to Shargeh concluded our tour in the Gulf, and, on April 12, we found ourselves back at Muscat. The weather had changed here in our absence. It was terribly hot; and at night the surrounding rocks seemed to part with the heat they had stored up in the day-time, and made the hours spent in their vicinity hideous. The thermometer will not read so high to any Englishman in his cool study; but 95° by day, a minimum of 82° some time in the early morning, and 20° of dryness in the air, becomes trying in a very few days, and enables us to form a slight conception of the danger and difficulty of pursuing slave trade suppression in these waters in the 'season' from July to November.

The gentle English girl follows her husband through all dangers, in all parts of the world, so perhaps we ought not to have been surprised—yet we were—to see

such an apparition in the midst of the surroundings of Muscat. 'Brave little heart,' is all we can say for her.

Our time was quite exhausted, and we could not make a stay of more than one or two days before giving up our thoughts absolutely to the capturing of slave dhows. Yet even that short time was not to be left to us untinted by Arab colouring.

I have previously mentioned how the territory on the Indian shore, farmed by Omān, had declined to acknowledge the new *régime* at Muscat. Azān, having settled accounts with the Ghaffrees, had leisure to turn his thoughts across the Gulf of Omān, and proposed to fit out an expedition for the conquest of the opposite shore.

Salim had left two of his grandfather's ships behind him when he fled from Muscat, and one of these, a little corvette, was in a condition to carry a force across the Gulf. Timely notice of the proposed arrangement reached the Political Agent's ears, and it became my business to authorise him to announce to the *de facto* Government, that I would stop—by force if necessary—any such attempt by sea.

Shaik Nasir came to see me on receipt of this bad news, very graceful and woe-begone; and I never saw him so sad or so resigned—or Mohammed so triumphant—as when the latter had to translate that there was no hope of a sea-fight for the former.

In Mohammed's words, 'I tell this shaik, if you please, sir, Queen Victoria shpeak, shay, Azān no take him soldier over to Gwadur—no make him fight that

country.' The expedition was forbidden, and the preparations for war broken up.

Poor Sheik Nasir! It was a joke against me that he and I rushed into each other's arms, when, after waiting several hours for my arrival after our return from the Persian Gulf, I at last came on board and met him. I have since understood that he perished under the musketry of Syud Toorkee.

On the 17th of April we sailed from Muscat, not to re-visit that most singular centre of Arab influence.

There is a point about the Persian Gulf which I cannot forbear to note. We in our journey saw four dead civilisations; the most ancient at Bushire, the next at Hormuz, the third at Bunder Abbas, and the most modern at Bassadore. The scale was a descending one. May we hope it has reached its lowest point, and that the telegraph cable lying among the pearls of Omān, and the steam-vessel which ploughs its waters for purposes of trade, shall be the harbingers of a new era which shall destroy the slave trade, with other evils?

CHAPTER VIII.

INSHALLAH!

We are now gradually passing away from the land of the Arab; we shall only see him in future on board his vessel at sea, or in his southern domicile, where he is no longer quite the same. It seems to me that, even with the necessarily crude notions I must have formed of him, I should sketch his character as I view it. He supports the northern slave trade—the baser specimens of his race carry it on—the finer specimen offers to his God the bequest of negro freedom—all his race become the masters of the East African bondsman. What manner of man is he?

The word I have chosen to head my chapter, is, I am told, as nearly as possible a literal translation of our 'please God.' If the connexion between title and subject is not seen at the outset, let it be known that, to my view, the key which unlocks the store-house I propose to examine, the prop which supports the roof, and the untempered mortar which seems to bind, while it loosens the whole edifice, are all hidden in the syllables 'Inshallah!'

The sound English 'please God,' or the refined contraction of the same phrase, 'D.V.,' carry with them

something of a reverent acknowledgment that we are in the hands of a higher power, but something also of a human will, which tends to test the Divine one. The Arab 'Inshallah,' in some aspects, connexions, and tones, means this also. But to suppose it limited to these meanings is to suppose the Arab to have but a single phase of character; for there seem to be no circumstances to which its use is not applicable, and no sentiments which it does not express.

While the commonest idea included in the English 'please God,' is human action subordinate to the Divine will, the commonest idea expressed by 'Inshallah' in the mouth of a true Arab, is human passiveness under Divine action. In this sense it is better translated by the Irish, 'Glory be to God;' although, in point of fact the English phrase in an Irish mouth, in which it becomes 'plaze God,' has something of the variety of sentiment which attaches to the Arab 'Inshallah.' Just inasmuch also as this is the case, does the Arab resemble the Irishman. The Arab's 'Inshallah' is as common as our 'all right' in conversation, and seems to creep into correspondence, like King Charles's head into Mr. Dick's memorial.

A chief calls to see you and you hope he is well?

'Inshallah! yes; he is very well, but Inshallah! he is growing old and is losing the sight of one of his eyes.'

'There are great eye-doctors in England who could cure you were you there.'

'Inshallah!' with a shrug, as much as to say, 'What is the use of your telling that to me?'

'But perhaps our doctor might help you ——'

'Inshallah?' this time with awakening interest.

'At any rate we can ask him.'

'Inshallah!' with a resigned sigh.

'I saw Abdul-bin-Souri the other day.'

''Shallah!' carelessly, while adjusting his robe.

'I don't think he is very friendly towards you.'

'Inshallah!' with a sly look out of the corner of his eye: the whole meaning, 'There is no love lost between us.'

'He thinks you are getting up a piratical expedition again—'

'Inshallah! he shall prove his words.'

'—and I think it is very likely you are.'

'Inshallah!' this time with hands and eyes uplifted, calling heaven and earth to witness the calumny.

'Said-bin-Hassan says that you shall pay him for that bugala you seized.'

'Inshallah!—does he not wish he may get it?'

'He has written to the Resident about it.'

'Inshallah! he can do what he pleases; but his grandfather owed mine many krauns, and Inshallah! I shall get my money.'

Inshallah in the sense of 'yes,' 'very well,' 'all right,' and so on, is generally contracted into ''Shallah,' and is uttered in an undertone at every pause in the conversation; and while it is impossible to make too little of the carelessness with which it is then pronounced, it is impossible to exaggerate the intensity of meaning which an Arab forces from the syllables when he wishes. One of the deepest curses in use in the south of Ireland is, 'That you mightn't,'—its very

vagueness supplying a strength of meaning not to be gained by a more precise phrase. I have heard an Arab curse 'Inshallah' with a gutteral depth that is comparable to nothing but this Kerry anathema. The young and desolate Irish widow, with the first rush of her new-found misery on her, phrases it thus: 'Himself is dead, sir, glory be to God!' The Arab merchant who sees the vessel in which his whole fortune is embarked, committed to the flames for illegal trading, has no expression at hand but, 'She was, and is not. Inshallah!'

While however 'Inshallah' thus bears so many meanings, and comes into use in such strange connexions, it must never be forgotten that it is intensely, and above all, the expression of a religious sentiment. Religious phrases in England get all the religion battered out of them when they come into common use. But I did not notice this about the commonest of all Arab religious phrases, 'Inshallah!' It seemed to me, however used, to carry the user, in idea, directly to the Unseen. I had hitherto believed the Mohammedan to be a formalist merely; when I met him in his own land, I saw a power in his faith of greater visible strength than I had seen in any other religion; and my mind swerved like a shying horse from what then seemed a delusion, namely, that Mohammedanism needed the sword to propagate it. The Arab and his religion are two things co-existent and co-incident. Such as the man is, such is his religion, and his religion is clearly expressed in the single word —'Inshallah.'

If the Turk's fatalism be defined as a fatalism of action, that of the Arab should be defined as a fatalism of inaction. The Arab would not insult the Deity by taking thought for the morrow. 'Matters are all in Allah's hands, let us drink our coffee in peace!' The prevailing tenet of the Arab, as I saw him—apart from dogmatic formula—is certainly a childlike faith in the unlimited goodness of God. 'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate,' so he commences his every-day letter; and the idea of God, merciful and compassionate, seems to pervade his every-day thought. I must fall back again on my Irish parallel and say, that only in the peasant of the south have I noticed anything like the same governing power. Mohammedanism has been credited with making fatalists of its votaries. Roman Catholicism can hardly be charged with the same fault. The impression roughly created in my mind is, that race and circumstance have in both cases drawn out of each religion the particular point which is most applicable to them, and which best suits their condition. The man has made his religion, more than his religion has made the man. If we had not practical evidence of its evil, we might well stand still to gaze on the beautiful picture of Arab trust in the goodness of his God. If there be in Mohammedan idea a devil, it does not seem the same definite embodiment of powerful evil which our word calls up. To us the devil, if he represents anything, represents a force or energy, thwarting, more or less, the ultimate goodness of our Creator. The devil, when we fall into misfortune, is suffered to torment us for our sins. The

Arab suffers *directly* at the hands of 'the Merciful, the Compassionate;' and he loves Him while he suffers.

In the case of both Irish and Arab, the root would seem to be constitutional indolence and weakness coupled with poverty. The peasant in the south of Ireland rarely has that solid burly look which belongs to his English prototype: his mental energy is considerable. The Arab is a small-boned lightly knit creature with a highly nervous organisation. It is inevitable that both races should be indolent. The poverty of both is extreme, riches are too far out of their reach to stimulate exertion.

It soothes the weakness of the Arab, and the Irishman, to make indolence a virtue: and it is easier to square our religion to our life than to square our life to our religion.

I doubt if any transaction in which I became engaged with Arabs failed to remind me more or less of the strength and weakness of the Irish race.

As the Irish gentleman is allowed, even by those implacably prejudiced against his country, to be truly 'gentle' in its old sense, so one chief characteristic of the Arab is that he is above all, and first of all, a gentleman. I do not mean a gentleman after his own or any other artificial standard, but a natural gentleman; a man free from pettiness, envy, or guile; with a manner wonderfully gracious; a speech ready but not too ready,—sympathetic but not overpowering; courteous, but not oppressively polite; hospitable, but not either vulgarly ostentatious, or uncomfortably eager to entertain you. This gentlemanliness of the

pure Arab is so perfectly recognised amongst Englishmen who are used to him, that only a stranger is surprised at it, and I was struck with an expression I heard from English lips more than once in reference to Arab chiefs: 'He is too much of a gentleman for that.' The phrase, when first I heard it, broke upon me with something like a new light, for it is not applicable—or at any rate is not used—in reference to other Eastern, or what we call semi-civilised races. One hears constantly of Mohammedan, Parsee, and Hindu 'gentlemen' in Hindustan, but this only means persons of the upper classes. None of them could ever be said to be a 'gentlemanly man.' The Parsee will talk as good English as you do yourself; he will make you an after-dinner speech which shall shame the county member; he will drive his mail phaeton with a dash and skill worthy of Hyde Park: but no one will ever say of him that he is 'too much of a gentleman to do so and so.' He may be honest, upright, sensible, quite European in his tastes and habits, but he is seldom that refined thing which we call a 'gentleman.'

The Hindu gentleman, or the Mussulman of India, is too firmly wedded to his own extremely artificial code of manners ever to be called a gentlemanly man.

So, however, it is not with the Arab; he neither has the unreasoning obedience to the dictates of an Oriental Mrs. Grundy, nor will he flatter the dominant race by imitation. He is grandly simple, and simply natural.

If we go a little below the surface for the reasons why one speaks of an Arab as essentially gentlemanly, especially when contrasted with other Oriental races,

I think we shall see that straightforwardness and frankness are the basis of his temper, in contradistinction to a diplomatic subtlety which governs the temper of the Indian. The Arab is fearless in outward demeanour: the Southern Indian is essentially fearful. The Arab disagrees with you in a manner frankly urbane; the Hindu agrees with you with a writhe like Uriah Heep. The Arab will, when necessary, wound your susceptibilities firmly, but delicately. The Hindu, without any necessity, will enrage you by fiddling about a sore spot. Nothing is more striking to notice, on questioning a Hindu, than his endeavour to give such an answer as will please you, without the smallest reference to the truth of the matter. He fears to offend you in your presence by bare truth, and offends you much more when you discover that you have been cozened.

From this view of the two characters it follows that, while the Indian is an exceedingly ingenious liar, the Arab is as clumsy as a child in that department of art.

The complimentary nature of Eastern salutations is proverbial; but I presume the Arab beats all other Orientals in the heartiness, length, and ingenuity of his compliments. The business part of an Arab letter always takes the place of a lady's postscript, and occupies only what remains of the paper, after the writer has exhausted his complimentary skill. In the following letter, his Highness Syud Majid, the late Sultan of Zanzibar, writing to our Minister for Foreign Affairs, does not appear to have placed any limits whatever to his complimentary desires, but seems to

have broken down from sheer exhaustion, and failure of epithet:—

'In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate!

'To his Excellency Lord Stanley, the Humane.

'A salutation more gentle than the zephyr, sweeter than a shower received by the meadows and the hills, more fragrant than ambergris mixed with musk, and more diffusive than combined civet and aloes wood: and a compliment brighter than the beaming light, and more resplendent than the leafy flowers, are offered to his Excellency who possesses perfection and superiority, who ministers greatness and virtues. His Excellency, the most noble, the most illustrious; the happiness of the age, the rarity of the times; the pillar of the body of Ministers; him in whom the exalted men of counsel glory; the manager of the jewels of the kingdom, to whom the least and the greatest give attention; the Minister of Foreign Affairs; the Tongue of the British Government!

'May God preserve his noble person and his beauteous ascendency! and may his penetrating views continue to clear up the intricacies of contention, and the beams of his genius to cast light upon the dark points of opinions. Amen.'

And here, doubtless, the reader might think that all had been said that could be said in praise of the Right Honourable gentleman, but, like a deceptive pause in a sleepy sermon, the 'Amen' is only a prelude to more. His Highness opens a new vein and style, and thus continues:—

'And then, next, the main design and general purpose is to inquire after the health of your noble self; after the equability of your exquisite condition. May you continue in blessings and joy, in honour and happiness: and may your house never be void of greatness and good fortune, and your days be sheltered from disasters and vicissitudes. Amen.'

Here again is a fair opening for entering on business, but his Highness disdains to avail himself of it, and goes on refreshed,

'And if the perfumed mind vouchsafe in kindness to enquire after the friendship of the Sincere One, then, thanks be to God, the King of Glory! he is in health and well-being, and in abundant blessings from the Lord; persistent in that friendship and sincere unanimity which he has undertaken; erect for the performance of such prayers and requests as are meet, upholding the palms of supplication and entreaty for the eternisation of your exalted government.'

And here at last follows the substance of the letter, which then winds up as follows:—

'Thus much: and may you continue in health, wealth, and abounding blessings. Written at such a date.

'This is from the true and sincere, and loving, and affectionate friend, Majid son of Said, son of Sultan.'

Anyone who has glanced over official Oriental correspondence will remember the letters 'A.C.' with which each document commences. The 'A.C.' stands for 'After Compliments,' and the style of the compliments has been given above.

What I have before mentioned in reference to the singularly religious temperament of the Arab is, I think, strongly shown even in the style of their compliments which I have just quoted. There are many passages which correspond with the ordinary utterances of sections of the Protestant Church, and there is through the whole of it that sort of feeling which I have heard technically described as 'An abiding sense of the presence of God.' While in some cases the display of this elevating sentiment, which I think we Protestants are much too liable to arrogate to ourselves alone, makes one inclined to serious reflexion, it sometimes appears in a connexion so incongruous, and a form so quaint, as to show a singularly ludicrous side. As an instance I may quote a letter which was written by six of the half-brothers of Syud Majid, the late Sultan of Zanzibar, to their elder brother Syud Thoweynee, Sultan of Muscat, to complain of their position under the rule of the younger brother.

After compliments—'We inform you, dear brother, that our dependence is on God first, then on you, to relieve us from the cruelty with which Majid is treating us. We were wretched after the death of our father Said, and Majid took no care of us whatever, neither did he notice us for good or evil, so that we were abandoned and had no one to sympathise with us. For a whole year Majid has forsaken us: he neither visits us nor inquires after us, whether we be dead or alive. Hence we are perplexed—knowing no one, and possessing nothing. All this in reality comes from Mohammed-bin-Salem who left us here with

Majid; may God not forgive him for leaving us with Majid who does not fear God! for if he feared God he would not have neglected us, but he does not fear God. For a month he has cut off our supply of food, and we have nothing to eat, and he has treated us with cruelty such as no one would be guilty of. When our brother Burgash was in Zanzibar, though he was poor like ourselves, yet we bore it patiently. Now however, that our brother Burgash has been expelled from Zanzibar, we can remain here no longer. Our reliance therefore is on God and on you to take us away from Zanzibar, for you are now in the place of our father Said. Moreover, when they stopped the water from our brother Burgash, it was also ordered that no water should be brought to us, and we were three days without water. Is all this agreeable to God's will? But were we to relate all the cruelty we have received from Majid, this sheet would not contain it. If such things are pleasing to God, and all the cruelty we have received from Majid, then we refer the matter to Him, for He alone is sufficient for it. Burgash used to pity us, but now he has been taken away from Zanzibar and we are desolate. We make this known to you, that you may take cognisance thereof. From Khaleefah, Meneem, Sheneen, and Nasir, Abder Rabb, and Bedran.'

In this letter may be traced another phase of Arab character, namely, its boyish simplicity. No doubt it was framed with all the diplomatic skill of the disaffected party at Zanzibar, in order to strengthen the hands of Syud Thoweynee who was then (1860)

endeavouring to make good his claims to the throne; yet no one would suppose so.

The Arab is a very nervous man. It may be possible that this nervousness helps to account for his simplicity, for it would be almost impossible for a man easily embarrassed, easily thrown off his balance, to succeed in social life, especially in manner, unless the rules of his society were of the very simplest character. The Arab's nervousness, consequently, is not always to be detected; one Arab confessed to me, that in my immediate presence he could not collect his thoughts except by great effort, and yet I had not been aware of it until then: afterwards I noticed it constantly.

His walk, attitudes, and carriage, are singularly graceful and dignified. He seldom walks fast, yet hi gait has no sign of sauntering or slovenliness in it.[1] A fine Arab is therefore physically speaking a very splendid specimen of humanity in appearance, which is generally much enhanced by the simple grace of his dress. Picturesque as the long sweeping robes and lightly twisted turban appear in a picture, they are still more so in real life, and even in this apparently small matter the gentlemanliness of the race comes out. The same feeling of confident modesty which finds expression in the words of Polonius relative to the habit of his son, may well form the basis of the Arab idea of dress.

The speech in question forms a complete description

[1] Burton says 'The foot gear gives him that peculiar strut which is deemed dignified.' (Zanzib. v. i. p. 105.) If my account is to be checked by a view from the other side, I should recommend Burton's.

of the 'tone' of the dress of an Arab chief. The cloth of his outer robe is usually of great softness and fineness, and the cotton inner robe is its counterpart in quality. He deals little in gold or jewels, what he wears are of great value and solidity, but the chief ornamentation is bestowed on his sword and curved dirk. The Arabs generally wear the beard and moustache, the former trimmed short and pointed, and the latter cut along its under side so as not to hide or interfere with the mouth. Sometimes when Captain Plunger sits opposite to me eating soup, I wish Arab fashion were commoner 'in society.'

To understand the true grace of the Arab chief in dress, he must be mentally compared with his Hindu prototype. The appearance of a native Indian Prince, especially on state occasions, always woke in my mind a variety of undefined and unpleasant sensations. The dress is immensely ungraceful, and the childish barbarism displayed in the crowded gold, pearls, and jewels, is revolting. No wonder if, coming from the contemplation of such tasteless fineries on a person by no means statuesque, one looks with something more than respect on the tasteful and plain array of the Arab chieftain.

Pure Arabs are remarkable for the beauty of their hands and feet. Many a belle of many a ball in England might justly covet the form, though not the colour of the hands of a six-foot Arab shaik. I believe a painter who represented their size accurately would get a character for bad drawing, though the actual

appearance is far from disproportionate. The fingers are long, flexible and taper, and no motion given to any English limb is comparable in grace to the slightest change of position of the Arab hand. In conversation he does a great deal with his hands, and I could not help sometimes fancying I understood what was said by merely watching their play.

From what I saw with my own eyes—irrespective of what I heard or read—I am inclined to think the Arab an essentially temperate man. By religion he is bound to be temperate; so are we, but nationally we belie our religion. The Arab neither eats nor sleeps to excess. He does not either drink or smoke: nor does he, that I know of, consume opium in any form. There are certain excesses charged against him in common with all Mohammedan peoples, which, however, I personally saw no signs of, nor can I imagine such excesses to co-exist with the physique I found predominant amongst the chiefs.

In the parallel which struck me so forcibly, and which I have attempted to draw, between the Irish and Arab characteristics, I must not omit a crowning instance. The Arab gentleman is always 'hard up,' and his estates are generally in somebody else's hands. In point of fact, it was said of Zanzibar, that the island was slowly but surely becoming British territory in consequence of the continuous foreclosure of mortgages which had for years past been going on; the purchasers being almost invariably British Indian subjects or natives of Kutch, who now live there under our

protection.[1] The Arab hates accounts, or records, is a specially bad man of business, and has unlimited faith in any one who will undertake to settle his affairs. From his want of records he is often likely to be over-reached by more wily races, but I generally understood—at any rate with reference to Arabia—that in the transactions between the Banian man of business and his Arab gentleman client, the strictest honour prevailed.

From what I have said, it will possibly be thought I am enthusiastic in my admiration of the Arab character, and would have all the world murmur 'Inshallah!' in unison. Let me now say in self-defence that the Arab is clearly an anachronism. There is no place for him in our world as it is, and but that he lives where no one else can live—in the stony furnace of Arabia—contact with modern civilisation would long ago have swept his ashes up and made the fireplace ready for a new comer.

From Zanzibar, from the African Coast, where a flash of his latent energy long ago carried him, he is fading very fast. The Arab is there becoming absorbed in the Negro, and the land would pass away from him were it permitted. His very language ceases to be spoken there, and the pure Arab of Omān is a stranger amongst his half-caste brethren of the South.

One chief reason why the Arab holds this place exterior to the world's economy as at present arranged,

[1] How this process, assumed in Arabia and the Gulf to be a natural solution of the slave-trade question, is artificially checked, will be hereafter detailed.

is, that he has two darling objects in life at variance with modern notions. Religion and war are to the Arab precisely what they were to the Knight Templar. He will certainly have religion whatever happens, but he will superadd war to it if he possibly can. A commercial man is a 'base churl' in his eyes; bargain and exchange, degenerate methods of obtaining what a gentleman should take at the sword's point. Plundering is therefore a gentlemanly way of getting riches; and there is probably not an Arab along the shores of the Persian Gulf who would not go on a marauding expedition to-morrow if he could: 'Inshallah! he would have some good fighting first, and some good plundering to follow!' In his wars he is not strategic, but he fights bravely sometimes, and occasionally with daring. If it is thought I paint the Arab nature with too gentle a pen, it may be told that I have in my mind's eye the while, the arch-warrior of the Gulf, Rahmah-bin-Jaubir; I see him as a man of seventy years, stone blind, fighting his vessel to the last, and then taking his youngest son, eight years of age only, by the hand, being led by his attendants to the magazine, and there blowing himself, son, crew and ship into a thousand atoms.

CHAPTER IX.

WEAVING THE SPIDER'S WEB.

Upon leaving Muscat, we dropped slowly down the coast towards Ras-el-Hadd, gathering information as we went, if only as to the appearance of the land, and as to the very small number of vessels astir in these waters at the present season. For the first time we were committed wholly and exclusively to the suppression of the Slave Trade. No other duty was to disturb us, no other object to awaken our interest for perhaps two months. We viewed the coast therefore entirely in its slave-importing aspect, and when we passed the town of Sur,[1] its apparent size and importance only made us think of the unknown extent to which it was directly engaged in the Slave Trade, and whether it might not be probably as great a mart for the imported ware, as Zanzibar was for that exported. Our view of Sur was compulsorily telescopic, but even that showed us its maritime influence. We could see many dhows built and building, and gathered the notion that Sur was, for an Arab town, a thriving one. Still, there was not much stir on the waters; a small fishing boat or two, close in shore, represented the

[1] Pronounced 'Soor.'

commerce of the place; all its real strength was, it might be, far off. So, leaving Sur no more closely investigated, we hauled up to pass round the promontory of Ras-el-Hadd.

It was the middle of April; and if the conditions under which the trade with Africa is conducted be recalled to mind, it will be remembered that some time ere this, the early dhows had quitted Zanzibar, and that every day would now see them sailing from the place in increasing numbers for the northern voyage.

The arrangements made this year for intercepting the slave traffic by the five men-of-war available for that purpose, were, I believe, altogether new in their character. That trade had never, since its suppression fell into the hands of the Royal Navy, been persistently attacked on the Arabian Coast, although some well-informed authorities had suggested such a locality as likely to produce a fair harvest of captures.

The plan now was to spread a spider's web all along the northern shores of the Arabian Sea, and the arrangements for spreading it were as follows:—

One ship was crossing from the Seychelles towards the African Coast, about Ras Assaud, slowly dropping up towards Cape Guardafui. Another was about Ras Hafoon: a third on the Arabian Coast about Macullah: a fourth was proceeding from Ras-el-Hadd towards Ras Fartak and onwards, while the fifth ship, our own *Dryad*, was to occupy the ground from Ras-el-Hadd to the Kooria Mooria Islands, and take up such successive positions as might be considered most advantageous for the trapping of slavers.

Brought face to face with our work, and obliged to consider it, we were apt at first to take a gloomy view. The general thought was 'what chance have we of making a bag when all the warm corners are given away, and we can only pick up the birds the other ships have missed?' Yet we consoled ourselves with the reflexion that a good shot is often not so badly off under such circumstances. When we further considered that it was supposed not even one-tenth of the slave traffic is intercepted in ordinary years, we perceived there might yet be some fair sport for us amongst the remaining nine-tenths this year.

But there were some more serious considerations than the mere chances of sport or no sport, which must be well thought out. What was to be done in the event of a great take of slaves? How was our position to be maintained on our station if the supply of coal ran short, and the south-west monsoon began early, and blew fiercely? Singularly enough, no record existed for us of any one having experience of the weather off this part of the coast of Arabia in the months of April, May, and June. Some P. and O. steamers had recently, by taking what is called the northern route in the S.W. monsoon, passed from Bombay to that part of the Arabian Coast which forms our station, but we had no accurate knowledge of how they found it.

All we did know for certain was this, that the south-westerly winds would soon begin to blow, and that every day henceforth the wind would blow more strongly than it did the day before, and the current would run more rapidly. Both wind and current would always

flow against us, that is to say, when we proceeded to land our captured slaves, to send a vessel for condemnation, or to have destroyed vessels adjudicated on and made lawful prizes to the *Dryad*.

In the chapter on Bombay I have spoken of the action of its courts. Although we were perfectly aware that prize courts did exist there, the facts I have mentioned came to us in common with the rest of the squadron as a dim tradition that the captors of a slaver before the Bombay Court, were very much in the condition of the pair who disputed before a lawyer for the possession of an oyster.

We were still subject to the infirmities of humanity, and would rather, so long as it was the law, receive the bounties provided by the British taxpayer for our benefit, as little reduced as might be. Therefore we had one good reason—setting aside long precedent—for not falling back on Bombay with a cargo of rescued slaves.

Again, the great object of our so falling back would be to land our slaves and return to the cruising ground with all speed. At the smaller prize courts we could settle half a dozen cases, and get half a dozen decrees in an afternoon. Rightly or wrongly, we believed in interminable delays in moving extensive machinery such as regular law courts at Bombay. This was another reason against using Bombay as our *point d'appui*—our port of refuge and replenishment.

We had made the discovery that the consul at Muscat held Vice-Admiralty powers as regarded the slave trade—that is, powers to decree condemnation—

conveyed in precisely the same terms as those giving the powers already exercised by the consul at Zanzibar. But these Muscat powers had never been used, and the holder of them was doubtful whether they were his. True, a demand for the exercise of his functions would perhaps have produced its effect; but we knew that difficulties at home had already been raised as to the jurisdiction of the Zanzibar prize court, and we doubted the policy of raising them on our own behalf at Muscat. But the great objection to Muscat was the want of provision for the landing of rescued slaves. If we put a prize through the court at Muscat we might still have to travel all the way back to Bombay with the slaves. There was, therefore, no port to which we could look for relief except Aden, and Aden was 700 miles from the nearest, and 1,100 miles from the farthest limit of our station. Most of the way there we must push against a strong current, and a foul wind, perhaps of great strength. It is true we were neither afraid of the wind nor the current in our good ship, provided only we had coal enough. But this was just the question. We were to meet we did not know how many vessels daily, which would require to be chased and overtaken. How soon should we exhaust that amount of coal which would leave us still with sufficient for the 700 miles' steaming we must expect at the end of our cruise? It might be that even a few days would find us obliged to quit our station: that a succession of useless chases at high speeds would so diminish our coal store as to compel a relinquishment of our duty even before we had touched the slave trade.

So that, though apparently a ship in the *Dryad's* position was capable of dealing a great blow upon such illicit traffic as might come that way, it will be seen how very limited her powers were.

The duty of the squadron when disposed as I have described, amounted to nothing short of an inspection of the whole trade from Zanzibar to the north. The spiders who had spread the web were bound to examine every flying thing which came into it; for in a web of this kind, there is no telling a wasp from a fly until their wings are folded, and it can be seen by minute inspection whether they have a sting or no. There is perhaps not a great deal of exaggeration in comparing such a duty to that of inspecting the trade of the English side of the Channel from the Lizard to Dover.

Great as were the difficulties before us of maintaining an inspection off the Arabian Coast close enough to be effectual, we knew on the other hand that our powers were ample. If we chose to assume the responsibility of condemning and executing a culprit, there was no one to question our decision until it had taken full effect. It was true we might deal out injustice to innocent men, and that a merchant engaged in legitimate trade might suffer from being in the stream where illicit currents run. But so far as damaging the really illegal trader went, we were hampered by none but the physical conditions mentioned, which did not apply to any vessel against whom illicit trading was proved to our satisfaction.

In my third chapter, I have spoken at length on the powers possessed by naval officers for destroying such vessels as they considered they had convicted of slave-

trading. These powers were only capable of exercise when from the unseaworthy condition of the vessel it was impracticable to send her to a port of adjudication. For vessels owning no name or nation, and for vessels owning the suzerainty of Muscat, the two classes we were most likely to meet with, 'the nearest or most accessible' place where there was a Vice-Admiralty Court was, by our 'instructions,' the proper 'port of adjudication.' The choice, as I have said, lay between Bombay and Aden. It would be a simple physical impossibility to take a dhow to Aden: no dhow could be safely sent to Bombay except in tow of the ship: all dhows were 'unseaworthy' in our sense of the term.

On the other hand it was distinctly laid down in the same Instructions that if we had 'detained a Muscat vessel' we must not destroy her 'without (if practicable) having first ascertained, by enquiries at the nearest Muscat port, that she was engaged in or equipped for the slave trade.'

To these instructions it was clear we must yield either a technical obedience, or one which looked to their spirit and to their root, which was undoubtedly the more effectual suppression of illicit trade, and the protection of the legal trader. If a technical obedience were yielded, what would happen?

The ship would very likely destroy nothing, and no injustice would be done to the innocent, but she might also in no way operate on the slave trade. The first suspicious vessel she met—say owning Muscat as her port—would be taken in tow for that place. By very

reduced speed, and the utmost care, she might be taken there in safety, but there would be no fresh evidence forthcoming to show that she was equipped for the slave trade, and she would be released. Supposing she were a dhow owning no 'name or nation,' she might possibly by an equal amount of care be taken to Bombay; but the ship taking her there would be sacrificing to a technical obedience the spirit of the whole matter, and the slave trade would pass up unchecked in her absence.

Under these circumstances it follows that a Naval officer must take upon himself the responsibility of innumerable breaches of the technical law for the sake of carrying out its spirit. Once his mind is made up on this point his course is clear enough.

Reflecting thus, I saw, or thought I saw, abundant means of discriminating between the legal and illegal trade on the coast from Ras-el-Hadd to the Kooria Mooria Islands, in such a way as to let no guilty trader pass unburnt or unscuttled, and to cause no innocent trader to suffer from more than detention.

My argument was this: there being no moral objection to the purchase of a slave or slaves at Zanzibar, the ordinary Arab might be expected to buy them and bring them up in his vessels every year. The only thing which would at all act as a preventive would be the danger of falling into the hands of an English man-of-war. If, however, it were to become known, or to be allowed, that a limited number of slaves might be carried north in each dhow without danger from men-of-war, such number would un-

doubtedly be carried in every vessel. A very excellent plan this, no doubt, for the comfort of the negro, as I before observed, but not very restrictive on the export trade.

It seemed to follow inevitably that, no matter how small the number might be, negro slaves who were exported from Africa for the first time in the vessels where they were found north of the treaty limits, invariably confiscated such vessels as illegal traders.

On the western coast of Africa it was common to seize an empty ship on suspicion, and the suspicion often turned out to be groundless. On the East Coast, it is almost always impossible to detect any difference between a legal and an illegal trader, if they are both devoid of slaves. On the coast of Arabia, at the season of which I am speaking, empty vessels are rare, but if found, are, from the very fact, void of suspicion. They may have landed slaves at a western port of Arabia, but if so, there is nothing to disclose the fact. A dhow carrying cargo is presumably innocent unless there are slaves on board who have now left Africa for the first time. If there were one single negro who declared himself shipped for the first time from Africa, and there were collateral evidence of the truth of his statement, it would, I considered, be the duty of the Naval officer to claim that vessel as forfeited, and it would be, further, his duty to destroy her, if his choice lay between that and letting her pass as an innocent vessel.

It was with such views of the duty before us that, on April 19, we rounded the low promontory of Ras-el-

Hadd. We had a pleasant fair wind and a smooth sea, and as we were now on our station, the question immediately arose as to what our course of procedure should be.

The appearance of the coast decided one point finally which had been undecided before. Ras-el-Hadd itself could not be our station. The primary objection to it was its great distance from Aden. If we remained there we must relinquish slave trade suppression sooner than we should had we taken up our quarters nearer the western limit of our cruising ground. It was easy now, when winds were fair, and currents were weak, to work along the coast westwards, but when the monsoon once set in, it could only be done at a considerable expenditure of coal. Nevertheless it was certain that all lawful and unlawful traffic from Africa to Arabia, Persia, and Turkey, culminated at Ras-el-Hadd, and if it were such a place as would enable a spider to catch all in her web, and at her leisure to suck the blood of the wasps and let the flies go free, the inconveniences of its distance from Aden might be faced.

But when we had the opportunity of personally inspecting the coast line, it was apparent that with our existing appliances, Ras-el-Hadd was not a convenient place for a spider to spread her web. It was everywhere beach: and on its southern side was no shelter for the ship. Every slave vessel might be expected in daylight to sight the ship as soon as the ship sighted her. It was to be supposed that the slaver would be close to the land, and a mere touch of her helm would land her slaves in security by run-

ning the dhow on shore ere the ship could reach her. It is true the dhow would be lost, but that would be only a tax on the profit of a slave cargo landed within a walk of their market.[1] The ship might possibly lie in concealment and shelter on the northern shore of the cape, but it was hardly to be supposed in such a case, that the Arabs of Sur would omit to communicate the fact to all approaching vessels, who would thereupon land their cargoes in peace on the opposite side.[2]

Ras-el-Hadd was therefore speedily condemned as our halting place, and we stood quietly along the shore, keeping it about three or four miles distant, while we scanned its more distant outlines and the horizon in a ceaseless search for vessels.

On one point we were still more ignorant. Whereabouts did the ordinary Zanzibar trader or the slave-trader strike the coast of Arabia? Did both, or either, pass inside or outside Socotra? and was there any point on the Aden side of Ras-el-Hadd past which the sea-borne commerce was compressed into a narrow channel?

In view of such doubts and of the circumstances already set forth, our final determination was to make

[1] The owners of a slave dhow measuring 135 tons, were satisfied to receive 900 dollars as compensation for her improper destruction. Such a vessel would have carried perhaps 150 slaves, worth possibly 6,000 dollars. A rise of 6 dollars per head would pay for the wreck of the dhow.

[2] Strong confirmation of the view taken in the text will be found in a despatch of Commander Doughty of H.M.S. 'Magpie,' given in Parl. Paper on Slave-Trade, Class B, for 1872. He had the misfortune to see three full cargoes of slaves landed under his eyes, out of which he only managed to recover 63 from the shore.

use of the wind to the last possible moment, and to let it carry us, if it would, to some convenient anchorage where we might lie hidden, but ready to spring out on our prey as it passed; our chief wish was that this point might turn out to be as near the western extreme of our station as possible, in order that we might have ultimately the less distance to steam to Aden.

But, as we had at this time no certain knowledge of how soon the head of the column of Zanzibar commerce,[1] and therefore the first slaver, might be expected, it was necessary that nothing should be allowed to pass us by day or by night unexamined. The arrangement was therefore, that we should not proceed by night, but lie-to regularly, and proceed again westward as soon as daylight broke. In this way we should see all that passed us by day, and though some craft might run past us at night, we should reduce the number to a minimum.

Up to the first evening we saw nothing and lay-to as intended. The wind was light and variable, but still from the northward generally, showing there was as yet no monsoon, and could hardly yet be trade. Daylight next morning found us making sail in for the shore,

[1] Perhaps our ignorance of the conditions of the trade—an ignorance widely shared—may be best illustrated by the fact that our only record relative to the probable date of its arrival was from a naval officer in 1867, and in these words, 'I was unable to arrive off Ras-el-Hadd until the middle of May: from the very few vessels we sighted, I came to the conclusion we were too late' (they were probably too early). 'I consider the beginning of April to be the best time of year for a vessel to be stationed off that part of the coast: a fortnight, or even a week, after that time, might make the greatest difference.'

where a small dhow was seen. She did not look the least suspicious, but we must board her, for she might be so. In the calm air our boat easily reached her, and as we were new to the work, and very eager indeed, the fact that the boat was seen to take her in tow towards the ship, created quite a sensation. She had negro slaves on board—some one could see their heads through a telescope. No doubt we must seize and burn her at once. Being carried close to the ship, the master of the vessel and two slave boys were brought to us. The dhow belonged to Sur, had come from Aden and Macullah, ten days from the latter place, with a 'very bad wind.' The negro boys said they had been four or five years from Africa. 'Domestic slaves: legal trader: let her go.'

Later, in the afternoon, the masthead man reports, five dhows coming up in shore. Down boats: officers away to board. A labour of some hours ere they get back to the ship. All from Macullah; ten or twelve days out. 'Domestic slaves: legal traders: let them go: and up boats.'

Presently, as we pass on, we hear again: 'Nine dhows in shore.' Down boats: officers away to board. Many hours' labour again, and then 'Up boats: domestic slaves: legal traders: all from Macullah to Sur: let them go.'

There is not by this time any eagerness, or any hope about these boardings—only a sort of general wish that legal traders could in some way be improved off the face of the earth. We have no opinion whatever of commerce.

Next morning we began again: plenty of small dhows in sight, plenty of work for officers, men, and boats. But there is a change in one case, the dhow is from Zanzibar, about thirty days, she states, and a smaller number of days from Macullah than usual. This is April 21, and we are only sixty miles from Ras-el-Hadd. There was a long examination of this dhow, for she was the first which could have brought up slaves, and it was consequently possible the three negroes on board might be slaves for sale; also possible she might have landed slaves at Macullah. However, the usual decision was ultimately come to—'domestic slaves: legal trader: let her go.'

The acquittal was no sooner pronounced than I was subjected to a ceremony I did not at first comprehend, though I became used to it afterwards. The master of the relieved vessel seized me tight by the whiskers and demanded a pass to clear him with any other man-of-war he might meet. Duly provided with one, he quitted us, protesting by Allah that the English were a grand nation.

I have no wish to weary the reader, but it is necessary I should do so here in the weaving of the spider's web. He might think slave-catching is all dash and excitement, whereas it is mainly drudgery and hard work. I find such expressions as these in my journal, which sufficiently indicate the nature of the service.

'The eternal boarding of dhows has gone on without intermission all day. Yesterday we sighted sixteen, all from the southward, and all small.'

'There is at the present moment a small dhow being

brought on board us by ——, the only one we have seen to-day,—until this minnte, when another is reported.'

'We boarded rather a large dhow last evening, about 6.30. She was from Macullah, for, and belonging to Busrah, flying Turkish colours, and laden with shark oil.'

'A dhow in sight, off Ras-ye. Boats in chase. She must be "legal" or she would have borne up before this.' 'Our dhow turned out legal. A Persian from Aden to Busrah with wood.'

Occasionally, the boats were sent in shore over night, so as to be ready to cut off any illicit people who might come into view at daylight, and run for the shore. But it was all to no purpose as yet. Generally the vessels, of which very few indeed were from Africa, complained of the 'badness of the wind,' a sure sign to us that the S.W. monsoon had nowhere yet completely set in. Such winds as we felt, were those known to mariners as 'land and sea breezes,' and favoured thereby we had worked down past Massirah Island.

We had observed no satisfactory lurking place for the ship, neither had we seen anything worth lying in wait for. A week's boarding of legal traders had taken the fine edge, so to speak, off our zeal, and we looked with some soberness on our future prospects. We had the more leisure to do this at the time I write of, as it had fallen a flat calm, and we had drifted into the Gulf of Massirah, a wide open space, where vessels might or might not sight us—where consequently we might or

might not 'do business.' Ras Madraka—otherwise Cape Isolette—was the next point where we were likely to find a concentrated traffic, and a lurking place on the borders of it. Two things determined a speedy voyage thither.

On this 25th of April, a light south-westerly wind was for the first time springing up; and we had been drifted twenty-four miles to the north-eastward in twenty-four hours. What retarded us, would help on the Zanzibar trader. We burnt some precious coal, and steamed away for Ras Madraka.

CHAPTER X.

THE ANT-LION'S NEST.[1]

It was the 26th of April. We had been just seven days on our cruising ground, and as yet we had seen nothing of the vast column of Zanzibar commerce which we knew was somewhere on its road, and would bring with it the illicit traffic we were to suppress. But we had noticed the indications detailed in the previous chapter; the current had begun to run up the coast of Arabia, we had actually seen one or two small vessels from Zanzibar, and now, we being twenty miles from Ras Madraka, the wind had set in steadily, though light, from W.S.W. The trade, legal and illegal, must be close at hand, and it behoved us to be ready.

Our thoughts had been much concerned with this Cape Isolette, or Ras Madraka, of late; and now that it was in sight, a red, rugged, peaked promontory jutting out into the sea, and terminating in a low rocky island, we all began to look on it with that fixed

[1] Any one who has watched the operations of this singular insect will readily apply the simile used in the title to this chapter. Others may be told that the creature commonly called the 'Ant-Lion' resides at the bottom of a sort of crater, whose sides are very fine sand. Ants, or other crawling insects venturing too near the edge, roll down and make a meal for the Ant-Lion.

attention which betokened a common thought, although the exact nature and bearing thereof was not yet quite clear to our minds. At any rate, it was determined that if we could get satisfactory anchorage under this cape, we should lie there for the night, and consider the position. In the afternoon we reached the place, and crawling cautiously in, found excellent anchorage in seven fathoms, apparently well sheltered from the south-westerly winds, and—still more important condition—well sheltered from the sight of any dhows coming up until—as we hoped—it would be too late for them to beat a retreat.

Having anchored, and been thus supplied with leisure to contemplate our surroundings, we began to think that we had dropped on the sweetest spot for the capture of dhows which the whole coast presents. For:—first, a straight line drawn from the east or outer end of Socotra to Ras-el-Hadd passes only fifteen miles from the cape. It is consequently directly in the line of traffic for slavers bound from Africa to the Gulf. Secondly, there is a peak on the cape, some 300 or 400 feet high, close at hand. To an observer at this elevation, the visible horizon would be twenty miles off, and probably a dhow's white sail might therefore be seen thirty miles from the cape in the daytime.

Thirdly, besides the good anchorage for the ship, already spoken of, there was good anchorage for the boats under the island, quite hidden from seaward. It therefore seemed to us that we had found our destiny in a spot which we should have no occasion

to quit till we did so finally. It was a sort of Ant Lion's Nest in which we might lie concealed, and into which every dhow passing within, say, twenty miles of the place, must inevitably tumble.

There is a feeling through the ship now, as though some gigantic wild beast was at hand, and no soul is without his ideas as to the best method of trapping it. Certain preliminary measures must be at once taken. Boats must be ready to fly out on the prey from the advanced post under the island; the ship herself must be ready to fly out after them at a moment's notice. The pinnace, and one cutter, are armed, provisioned, and watered for a week. Officers are told off to command them, and their directions are that, when ready, they shall find a convenient anchorage as near to the open sea as may be consistent with shelter.

Both boats carry abundance of rifles and pistols: the pinnace has in addition a twelve-pounder Armstrong gun; the men number twenty-six, and the force is sufficient for the most turbulent slaver likely to be met with. Next for the ship: the fires are what is called 'banked' under two out of her four boilers; that is to say, they are pushed back and kept low, but ready to be stirred up again in a moment. Under such conditions, the ship can always be up and away in ten or fifteen minutes.

Some of us on board pride ourselves on our knowledge of what can be done by signals, and it here becomes important to arrange a code with our boats. For the present, they must rely on orders from the ship, for neither by night nor by day can those in them see over

the island. The ship, however, has a little spy place, a bit of horizon between the high mainland and the island, on which somebody's eye is supposed to be fixed night and day, and the instant the point of the great lug sail, with whose appearance we are becoming so familiar, shows itself over the sloping rock, the ship is to warn the boats—'Dhows in sight!' and the boats are supposed to rush round the corner of the island and spring upon their victims. When we have established that a certain large flag by day, and certain flashes of gunpowder by night, mean 'Dhows in sight,' our elaborate code of signals is perfect so far as intelligence going one way is concerned. But we have considered that at night we may not be able to see what is going on when we have despatched the boats in chase. They may find more on their hands then they are able to manage, and it is consequently arranged that a rocket fired from the boats is a signal that the ship is wanted.

For the present, when these arrangements were made, our plans were complete; but we had in our minds some more elaborate machinery for keeping a look-out on the high peak by day and on the island itself by night. A very little distance by night makes all the difference in the efficiency of a look-out, and the ship must lie a mile inside the island. Hence, as soon as what I have described was completed, I proceeded to the shore with some of the officers for the purpose of making a nearer acquaintance with the locality, and selecting the points where a look-out might be kept.

On nearing the anchorage we had observed the extent of white sandy beach, which everywhere bounded

the bay. The man-of-war's man—officer or man—always views a beach under two aspects,—its capacity for yielding sand for holystoning the decks, and its availability for the purposes of 'hauling the seine,' that is, of net fishing. We had noticed abundance of fish all along the coast and continually surrounding the ship. Indeed it was impossible to avoid thinking of fish at Ras Madraka in consequence of the eccentric behaviour of the skate or ray inhabiting these waters. They were of great size, they wended their way in shoals, and tinted the water quite green as they passed beneath its surface; but their eccentricity lay in a habit they indulged in of coming several feet out of the water with a bolt, turning one or two somersaults in the air, and then allowing themselves to fall flat with a crash on the surface of the water.

It was therefore as to its capacity for producing fish and sport that the Madraka beaches attracted attention, and, as I left the ship in one boat, the first lieutenant with two others went away 'seining.' I had desired him to take the island beaches first, as although our only printed authority stated the inhabitants to consist of but 'a few miserable fishermen of the Jenebeh tribe,' wild Arabs are wont to migrate and wander, and a volley from the surrounding rocks on the seining party might be unsatisfactory. I, however, with the other officers, pushed towards the base of the promontory on the mainland, leaving the seining party on our left going towards the island. On approaching the shore, we saw some ten or fifteen Arabs, who gradually fell back inland amongst the rocks. As

well as could be seen they were armed with the usual spears and muskets. I had taken the precaution of arming one of the seining boats, and was not afraid to despatch Bin Moosa and my coxswain after the retiring natives, with directions not to run into danger or to get far from the shore, but to endeavour to open friendly relations with the Arabs. Though their numbers might be few at present, we knew that a hostile intent on their part might not only give us infinite trouble, but might assemble force enough to interfere seriously with our operations.

A short, but very heavy walk, or rather crawl, over the burnt-up crags, took us to a little plateau perfectly defensible, and suited in all respects for a look-out station. We had a glorious sweep of vision over the sea, while inland, broken rock and mountain limited the view. We settled that this should be the signal station, and then descended to the island. It was nearly low water, yet we were pleased to see a good wide channel of only fordable shallowness between us and the island, for it told us that, whatever might be said as to the safety from attack on the mainland, our parties might rest in perfect security on the island.

There was so much of the picnic in the whole thing, as far as we had gone, that a boyish paddle in the channel was undertaken with relish, and then a scamper over the sand brought us into the midst of the boisterous, merry, fishing party. We had heard nothing of my coxswain and Bin Moosa, nor had we seen them since we landed; but my gig still lay where we had disembarked from her, and the boat's crew were saun-

tering on the beach, so we had no cause to think particularly of them.

The fishermen had had excellent sport. Many hundreds of various kinds of fish lay in heaps on the beach, and we were told that the numbers which had escaped under and over the borders of the net would have doubled the capture. When we arrived, another haul was in progress, and I and the other officers 'tailed on' to the hauling lines as in duty bound. As the net approached the shore, the fish began to spring and jump like wild things—it was the largest haul yet made, but the rush to escape was so great and continuous, and the fish were so large, that we began to dash after individuals, and to capture them in the shallows. In the heat of the proceeding I found myself doubled up on my hands and knees in the water, endeavouring to collar two enormous, violent, unruly fishes, and to keep my watch from being wet at the same time, while all around were fish leaping and splashing, men yelling and shouting, and a general chaos of fun, fish, and confusion. My two monsters were not amenable to discipline, one of them stuck his spines into me, and then made a clean pair of fins between my legs. He thus enabled me, however, to concentrate my attentions on the other, upon whom I accordingly knelt steadily until I worked my hand under his gills, and after a fierce but brief struggle landed him in triumph on the beach.

While yet the flush of the combat was on us, and while we were in the full pride of victory, splashing with hasty foot, with loud tongue, flying hat ribbon,

and confused diction, comes Williams, one of my gig's crew.

'Aggis is took, sir! and Fletcher only saved hisself by running under the rocks. They's been and fired on him, sir, four shots, and is a comin' down the gullies!'

Here was a pretty to-do, and a nice conclusion to our picnicking! If they captured our interpreter where should we be? He must be rescued at all hazards.

I sent off the seining boats, and arming my gig, which had now crossed with Fletcher in her, from one of them, took another officer beside me, and pulled over towards the point where Bin Moosa was said to have disappeared. On our way, we asked Fletcher for his story, which he gave us in these words:

'Well, sir, there was a lot of 'em on the hill; and Aggis, he said they was a callin' of him to come; and I says, "We's far enough from the boat." But he says it was all right; and then when we gets close, says Aggis, "They's sayin' they'll kill us!" Then they sits round us with them spears and daggers, and——'

'Then,' I interrupted, 'they had no muskets?'

'No, sir, I seen no firearms. So, they sits round, and says they, "What's your ship come here to make bobbery for?" So Aggis, he says, "We ain't come to make no bobbery. We wants water, that's all." So they says, "He's tellin' lies." And then they shows their spears and swords, and makes motions of cuttin' our throats. And then they makes Aggis sing a song—and then they wants my neck handkercher, and says they'll have my hat ribbon (I gives 'em that 'cause I got

another one on board), but they puts their swords to my neck—oh, I didn't like it at all I can assure you, sir. So then they says, "Let the Englishman go; we'll take this here Arab up into the country to the king"—for the chief here ain't a king, sir, he's only a head man. So Aggis, he says I'd better go, and he would make it all right: so I comes down to the boat, and here I is, sir.'

Fletcher's story put a somewhat better complexion on matters, so that when we arrived at the point indicated by the coxswain as being nearest to the village, we were not altogether surprised to see our friend Aggis walking down to the boat in amicable converse with two Arabs in whom black blood predominated. All that we had to do therefore was to land and shake hands with these gentlemen, expressing the gratification which we felt in making their acquaintance. A little friendly chat soon established diplomatic relations, and the promise of some biscuits and cloth in the morning confirmed an alliance thus doubtfully begun. Their promise was, as Aggis expressed it, that the place should be to us 'all the same English place,' during our stay. Although from these poor men we thus saw nothing to inconvenience our operations, there were still the others whom we had before seen; and it was still not considered desirable to allow unarmed parties anywhere on the mainland. There was at the time a sort of tradition amongst naval officers on the station, that no one would be held blameless who sacrificed his men in the pursuit of slave-catching on shore. It proceeded, I believe, from an old West Coast order forbidding the

landing of naval force for the destruction of barracoons, but however it arose, there remained the tradition.

On our way off to the ship, Aggis amused us by *his* version of the transaction, prefacing his narration by saying,

'Oh, I think I makee die this day! Never so near die before!'

'Well,' said I, 'Aggis, what did they say to you?'

'Oh, they say'—here he elevated his voice and shouted Arabic in monotone—'that mean, "I think I see a man I like to kill before night: I think I kill him and eat him! Come up! Come up and be killed! Oh! I like to kill some one now!" And then we go up, and all the Arab come round and they say, "You no Musselim? You no savey the Korān? We makee kill you this night!" Then I say, "You speakee lie: me good Musselim, me savey the Korān." Then they say, "You speakee lie, you no savey the Korān—no make five prayer one day?" Then I say, "Yes, all right, make five prayer one day; I savey the Korān." Then they say, "Speak Korān s'pose you know him." Then I say,'—here he assumed the whining falsetto known to all Eastern travellers as universal in quoting the Koran, and thus I learnt the nature of the 'song' my coxswain had spoken of. Previously it had seemed an odd sort of proceeding that a man should be called on to behave like a swan as a preparation for execution. —'Then,' said Aggis in conclusion, 'they say, "You send Englishman away!" so I send coxswain down to boat; and then they say, "If ship no come to make bobbery, what come for?" Then I say, "Come for

water, that all." Then we make more talk, and all right; and then I come down to boat.'

When I arrived on board I found all our arrangements for the trapping of dhows were complete. The armed boats were away under the island, the look-out men were at their posts, and the signalling apparatus was at hand and prepared.

The ant-lion was ready for her prey.

In most of H.M.'s ships there is a fine old custom, when the ship is at sea, or in places where everyone must be on board, of a nightly assemblage for the purposes of whist. Our play may not always come up to the standard at 'White's,' but we think we have spent an unprofitable evening if we do not get through our regulation rubber or so. This first night of our genuine slave-catching was to be no exception as regarded our game, and four of us about 9. P.M. were deeply involved in 'reserving our aces' 'finessing' our kings, and generally bewildering ourselves and our partners.

Trumps however were not coming my way in sufficient numbers, and my attention was consequently wandering from the game under my eyes, to the boats under the island. I thought I would go on the poop to 'have a look round.'

It was a fine bright moonlight night, without very much wind, but enough to show that the S.W. monsoon was beginning steadily, and to make me think of coming dhows. The boats, lying quietly under the island, could just be made out with a pair of night-glasses; the appointed signalman was at his post, spying at the opening between the island and the mainland; and

all seemed quiet and uneventful. Remarking to the officer of the watch that 'it was a fine clear night for the observing of dhows should any pass,' I was just about to descend to resume our whist, when my attention was attracted by a white point like a tent on the island, where certainly no tent was. The tent moved away to the left—it was the tip of a dhow's sail! there was another behind it, and yet another!

'Signal the boats! quick now!'

Five or six puffs of gunpowder blind one for a moment, and then we see one, two, three, four dhows, sweeping away at a rapid rate to the left. The signalman calls out: 'There's two more of 'em, sir, t'other side of the island,' and we see, beside these, two more tips of sail over the island itself. There is a fleet of eight dhows all rushing past the ant-lion's nest, and every one of them may, for aught we know to the contrary, be running a full cargo of slaves!

No one has much need to be told what to do: the boats under the island are away in a moment, and seeing the state of the case, have blazed off the signal rocket to warn the ship she will be wanted. The remaining boats on board are in the water, manned, armed, officered, and off in chase, almost before the orders can be given. The chief engineer has warned his people below, and now waits ready for the order, 'Draw the fires forward and up steam as fast as you can.' He is off like a shot, and sounds of shovelling and shouting come rolling up from the stoke-hold in a busy clatter.

'Now then! hands, up anchor!' Round goes the

capstan like a mill wheel, and the ship is off almost while the story is telling.

We can see from the ship that though the dhows are swift, the boats have managed to throw themselves across their path. A bright flash! there goes the pinnace's gun. A rapid succession of smaller flashes assures us that our men are firing their rifles across the bows of the vessels in order to bring them to. The unfortunate dhows are now steering in all directions. No doubt they never expected, at that quiet hour, to tumble into such a hornet's nest; and who amongst them knows whether rapine and murder may not be intended? They are all bewildered with the fusillade, and know not whether to fly or to surrender.

The appearance of the ship coming from under the land soon quiets any fears the innocent may have had, and tells them all that it is only those eccentric Englishmen slave-hunting again. So one by one they lower their sails, and the boats board them. Seven out of the eight are supposed to be suspicious; and it is not, of course, possible to know in the dark, and in the state of perturbation into which the Arabs are thrown, how far the suspicions are justified. I decide to take the whole seven up to the anchorage till the morning.

The current was now running so much more strongly than it had been, that the ship and her captive dhows drifted very many miles in the process of picking them up and taking them in tow. It was two o'clock in the morning before we were safe at our anchorage again. At sunrise we had the unwonted sight and sound of

seeing and hearing the Arab crews at their prayers as the dhows lay in a long chain astern of the ship. It was not possible to avoid thinking of the enormous inconvenience—to say the least of it—to the legal trader in being thus caught midway in his voyage, and detained for an indefinite time, pending examination; yet, on the other hand, it will be clearly enough shown by-and-by, that nothing short of this interference with lawful trade will avail to detect the illicit carriage of slaves up the coast.

When the morning routine of the ship was complete, it became our business to conduct the examination of our *detenues*, and we proceeded in this way:—

A boat was sent to the sternmost of the chain of vessels with orders to bring on board her captain and any suspicious-looking negroes there might be. We were by this time fully aware that full-grown negro men are not suspicious, but that negro boys, and especially negro children, are very suspicious on the face of things. The boat returned with a handsome old Arab and three young negro men dressed in a partially Arabic costume. The Arab captain bowed politely to me, and made motions with his hands as though introducing his young black friends. The negroes looked as stolid, and as much at home, as though to be captured at dead of night and taken on board a man-of-war the first thing next morning, was but an everyday incident of their lives. They selected a convenient spot and reclined upon the deck.

The captain now produced to me a clearance in English, from Aden, wherein the dhow was named

the 'Summah;' but as will be seen presently, we could not admit that at once as absolute proof of innocence.

We had determined to conduct these examinations according to some form, and our experience had already settled what the form should be. Two officers with me, constituted a 'Court' in my cabin, and successive witnesses were brought up in charge of Bin Moosa and interrogated.

The reader must therefore imagine us seated gravely at a small round table, with Bin Moosa—infinitely grave—awaiting our directions. The Arab captain is outside on the quarter-deck. The first matter is the English clearance; it is quite formal and correct, and dated a month back.

'Now Moosa, tell the captain to come in.'

Moosa retired and re-entered followed by the Arab captain, who glanced with curious suspicion at the three judges, and bowed politely.

'Ask him, Moosa, what is the dhow's name?'

Moosa—'Yarrif?'

Captain—'Yarrif.'

Moosa—'Yarrif??'

Captain 'Yarrif.'

Moosa—'Yarrif???'

Captain—'Yarrif.'

The Court—'What are you saying to him, Aggis?'

Bin Moosa approached the table and put his finger on it.

'Oh, I say to him, "You speakee true?" and he

say, "Yes, I speakee true." — Then I say, "You speakee true?" and he say, "Yes, I speakee true."'

The Court—'Very well: now ask him what is the name of his dhow?'

Bin Moosa has a long conversation in Arabic or Swahili, we are ignorant enough not to know which.

The Captain—'Haaf,'

Bin Moosa—'Say name of dhow "Haaf."' (Sensation in the Court, and reference to the pass where the name is certainly 'Summah.')

The Court—'Tell him that is not the name in his pass.'

Captain, through Moosa—'Say name "Haaf?"'

The Court—'Now ask him where he came from?'

Bin Moosa, after conference—'Come from Aden.'

Not to make this story as long to the reader as it was when originally given, I may state that the Arab captain reported himself as belonging to Sur; fourteen days from Aden, and nine from Macullah, the distances being 800 and 600 miles respectively.

From Aden to Macullah he took dried fish, but finding no market there, could only sell a little, and was carrying most of it back to Sur. The three negroes were not slaves—so he stated—he paid them regular wages; two or three dollars per month.

The only thing suspicious against this gentleman was therefore, so far as his own statement went, the wrong name in his Aden clearance. He was dismissed for the present, and the three negroes were called in. They all stated that they belonged to Sur:

they all understood Arabic more or less, and they confirmed the master's story generally.

We knew of course that the three are slaves, and are probably paid no wages. If we wanted proof of the fact, we should have it abundantly, as neither captain nor negroes would agree, when examined separately, as to the amount of wages paid or received. But although there was something odd about the vessel's pass, there was no proof she had been to Zanzibar at all, and it was almost certain the negroes were old importations. The result is that captain and negroes are sent on board their vessel, with directions to wait for further orders. These further orders are very soon given, for it turns out that the veritable 'Summah' is one of the six other vessels, and has the 'Haaf's' clearance—so the change of passes is made, the two captains are told they may be off when they like, both seize my whiskers, demand and get their passes as having been examined by us. Both dhows hoist their 'preposterous sails' and speed away to Sur, rejoicing.

Having thus disposed of 'Number 1' and 'Number 7 dhow' as they appeared formally in my notes, the master and any suspicious negroes are ordered on board from Number 2 dhow. The result, besides the captain, is one negro boy 10 or 12 years old.

The Arab captain was evidently not quite at his ease. He was a small, wiry, middle-aged man, with wandering furtive eyes, and on arrival in the cabin, he squatted down in a corner and glanced with winking suspicion round the place. He thrust a paper into Moosa's hands,

and then, pushing his doubled fists into his cheeks, sat still.

The paper was the usual Zanzibar clearance sealed with the stamp of Sultan Syud Majid.[1] It was the first time such a thing had been so presented to us, although I had been shown a similar paper by a brother officer at Bombay. It was a terrible trial to Moosa, whose finger wandered with great uncertainty over the Arab characters; by dint of much spelling out however, he managed to gather that the clearance stated the vessel was a fishing trader to and from Zanzibar. By dint of equally minute cross-examination we were able to learn that, according to the witness, the dhow belonged to Sur, was about a month from Zanzibar, that she had sold a cargo of beans or grain at Macullah, and was bound to Sur with the proceeds.

So far so good; but Bin Moosa was not quite satisfied with the manner in which the evidence had been produced; he was in high altercation with the crouching

[1] Dr. Ethe of Oxford has been kind enough to furnish me with a translation of the form of one of these documents, which I here annex:

CERTIFICATE.

'*In the name of the Most Merciful and Compassionate God.*'

'From (the Sultan of Zanzibar).

'Know by these presents all our benevolent and most respectable friends who are resident on men-of-war, and travelling from east to west and from west to east continually, (may God give a helping hand to you!) that this is the vessel ——— belonging to ——— coming from ——— going to ———. Beside the captain and owner, there are on board ——— seamen and ——— passengers.

'Do not throw any obstacle in their way, but fulfil all the obligations of friendship, and all the respects of familiarity.

'Dated ———.'

figure on the deck, and the crouching figure was appealing to heaven against him.

'What is the matter, Moosa?' Moosa approached the table and put his finger very decidedly down.

'This Arab man speakee lie.'

However, for the present, the 'Arab man,' is told to retire, in order that we may hear what the small negro boy has to say for himself.

The boy, well grown, but stolid-looking and idealess in appearance, squatted down where the Arab had squatted before him.

Bin Moosa had some talk with him—some cross-questioning with an increasing eagerness of manner—while the negro showed no signs of emotion whatever. The former then turned round, and marking the point off as one about which it was impossible to dispute, said:

'This nigger, slaver.'

'Very well, Moosa, very well,' says the Court, 'but now ask him where he came from?'

Moosa, after interpreting, and being answered, 'Come from Kilwa.'

'Has he ever been to Sur?'

'He no savey Sur—come from Angoja—Zanzibar—in dhow.'

'Ask him who is his master?'

'Master, he dead.'

'Ask him where his father live?'

'Father he dead—got another father in dhow.'

'Ask him if any more slaves came up with him?'

'No more slaver come up, only himself.'

'Ask him if he can speak Arabic?'

'No savey Arab—savey Swahili.'

In this case, I had that distinction which I had considered it was proper to make. If it should become clear that this single slave boy were bought, or otherwise obtained, south of the limit laid down by treaty, and carried beyond it, it would be my duty, or that of any Naval officer in my place, to detain the vessel.

However, as several presumably innocent vessels must not be detained for one possibly guilty dhow, we determined to put the case of No. 2 dhow aside for the present and proceed with the others. So, in order that there might be no tampering with witnesses, the boy was kept on board, and the captain suffered to return to his dhow.

'The Court' then proceeded to the trial of 'No. 3 dhow,' the necessarily awkward part of the whole affair being that we were running a perfect tilt against that dictum of English law which says that a prisoner is presumed innocent until proved guilty. We, on the contrary, were bound under the circumstances of the case to assume every dhow of the seven to be guilty until proved innocent. Every one of them had negro slaves on board; and unless these could be shown to be 'domestic slaves,' not now for the first time off the coast of Arabia, every dhow of them was bound to become a prize to the *Dryad*.

No. 3 dhow produces her captain and three young negroes, no papers, colours, or other indication of her belongings. She is fourteen days from 'Mioreah.' She left Sur four months back; caught fish and dried

them along the shore. Sold them at 'Mioreah' and is now on her way back to Sur with the proceeds—rice and dollars.

'Now, Moosa, ask him about the three negroes?'

'Oh, he say nigger not slaver—belati Suri—belong Sur; pay him three dollar one year.'

'Now ask him where master of negro live?'

'Master, he dead.'

'Ask him where father of negro live?'

'Father he dead.'

Captain now dismissed and first negro called in; an oldish boy.

'Moosa, ask him where his master live?'

'Master he dead.'

'Ask him how long from Zanzibar?'

'Oh, he say, "Come from Zanzibar three months, then go Sur, then go Aden, Macullah, then come back Sur."'

'Moosa, try him with a little Arabic.'

'Oh, he savey a little Arab.'

We had seen Sur from the sea, and had learnt a little about it from books. Questioning the negro thereupon, we found he certainly had seen the place. He was dismissed, and the second negro called in.

'Ask him where his master live?'

'Master he dead.'

'Ask him where father live?'

'Father he dead: got another father at Sur.'

'Ask him how long been in dhow?'

'Been two years.'

'How many dollars captain of dhow give him?'

'Give him five dollar one month; belati Muskati; speak little Arab.'

Cross-questioned as to Muscat, we find he knows the place. There is little doubt of the innocence of this trader; so we let him go, and he follows the 'Haaf' and the 'Summah,' comforted by a certificate of his legality.

In this way we worked through the remaining four vessels, all of whom were released one after the other, and there was only now left this suspicious case of Number 2. She is the only one of the seven which has come from Zanzibar this season, and she is the only one with a negro who declares that he has never been to Arabia before. The simple statement of the boy is however by no means sufficient alone to condemn the vessel—it might be one of those rare cases in which the slave wishes to quit his master, and conceals the truth about himself for the purpose.

It had taken the whole day to get through the examination of these vessels, and this single suspicious one stood over until the next morning. Then our court re-assembled, and we had the furtive Arab before us again. But as some close questioning would probably be necessary, the whole of the crew of the dhow were brought on board and placed each in a separate part of the ship, so that they could not communicate with one another.

Bin Moosa had been exercising himself over the official pass in his leisure hours, and now made out the main drift of it, which was that the vessel sailed a month back from Zanzibar with rice and calavances (a

sort of bear) for Sur, having brought fish from the north to Zanzibar previously.

One of the first points I was desirous of ascertaining was, whether this Arab captain was aware of the risk he had run supposing the boy should turn out a fresh exportation from Zanzibar: and whether he would acknowledge the justice of his condemnation under such circumstances. This was not necessary for forming a judgment on the particular case, but was most important as supplementing the legal right and duty of the naval officer by a moral right, acknowledged even by the sufferers.

Nothing could be more clear than the Arab's own decision on the point, or the conviction he expressed that a righteous condemnation of his vessel would follow on proof of a single newly-exported slave being found on board; and I may add that having put the same question to very many Arab commanders, both before and since the particular case in hand, I am able to say positively that the belief is universal amongst them that condemnation may properly follow the export northwards of one single negro in the vessel.

Another point into which I made it my business to inquire, was—what would be accepted as a proof of recent exportation? and I found that, by the admission of all Arabs, a total absence of knowledge of Arabic in the slave was of itself proof positive.

Our poor old Arab friend was desperately perturbed this morning when his re-examination began; it was plain he knew he was in the toils, and feared there was no way out of them.

Our first care was to go cautiously over the evidence given by him on the previous day, and by dint of cross-examining Moosa to ascertain that there was no flaw in the interpretation. Then we came to the cream of the matter.

'Moosa, ask him how many slaves he brought from Zanzibar?'

Bin Moosa has some strong conversation with him, which results in a sobbing appeal to heaven with uplifted hands on the part of the Arab.

'He say,' returned Bin Moosa to 'the Court,' 'he say, no bring one slaver from Zanzibar—he speakee lie.'

'Now ask him, where he got that slave boy?'

'He say,' observed Moosa after conference, 'boy no slaver. Got him at Suri. Boy live five months at Sur before come in dhow. He say take him Sur, go Zanzibar, now bring him back Sur.'

'Tell him, if boy live at Sur, go Zanzibar in dhow, boy speak some Arabic.'

'Oh, he say, boy savey Arab.'

'Ask him where boy's father live?'

'Father he dead—die Suri.'

'Ask him if he is quite sure he no bring slave from Zanzibar?'

'He say, quite sure no bring slaver—he speakee lie.'

'Very well. That will do for him. Now we'll have the small boy in again.'

The boy had been experiencing the comforts of an English man-of-war for a day, and was evidently satisfied with his present condition. He repeated distinctly

his former story, and being tried with a word or two of Arabic, betrayed no sign of comprehending it.

He was now sent out and placed by himself on deck; we next had in one of the crew, a young Arab, almost a boy. He was disturbed about nothing, and stated at once that the boy was straight from Zanzibar. Number two crew gave his evidence to the effect that the negro had lived seven years at Sur to his certain knowledge. The captain of the dhow was not the boy's master.

'Then where his master live now?'

'Master, he dead.'

Number three and number four of the crew, successively called in, were positive the boy came on board at Sur. Number five crew, being the last, was equally positive the boy came on board at Yalan.

The case for the prosecution was thus complete. We had the boy's testimony, and that of one of the crew, that he was direct from Zanzibar, while there was a discrepancy amongst those who denied the fact, as to where he had come from.

The old Arab, more crouching than ever, and the piece of property, for whose possession he was unable satisfactorily to account, were brought in together.

'Now, Moosa, you tell him I must take his dhow, for he bring this slave boy from Zanzibar.'

The poor old man began to sob when this was translated to him. The dhow, some 200 dollars on board her, and the slave boy, formed the mass of his property.

'Would I take the boy, and let him go?'

'No, Moosa, tell him I cannot do that—tell him I

must burn his dhow, but ask him where he got that boy.'

'He say catch him Zanzibar. No belong him. Belong one man in dhow. He no buy him. Say, before speakee lie, now speakee true.'

'Tell him, Moosa, very sorry, but must take dhow all the same, whether he speak true or lie.'

More sobs from the Arab followed this announcement and then we drew from him the full confession that he had bought the boy at Zanzibar for fourteen dollars, and that he had hoped to sell him at Sur for about thirty dollars.

This was the end of the case: we had obtained first, a clear conviction, and then a confession of the offence: and we had moreover the satisfactory acknowledgement that the impending punishment was just. When, however our crouching friend departed in a passing dhow to his own home at Sur, one could not help feeling glad the old fellow had been spared the sight of the destruction of his vessel, which took place in the afternoon. Nor could one avoid thinking how very far beyond the moral guilt of his offence was its punishment. Nor, on the other hand, was it easy to avoid some satisfaction in the thought that the next time our friend went a-trading to Zanzibar, he would probably think the risk to his vessel was not covered by a possible profit of fifteen dollars on a single slave.

The two days, which had been occupied in these trials and conviction, were otherwise quiet enough. On the first day a couple of legal traders passing by, had been boarded, examined, and dismissed by the boats

from under the island; on the second day the same process had been repeated, with the same result. These successive boardings, however, disclosed a weakness in our arrangements—a sort of breach in our net—which we might acknowledge, but could not remedy. The current had been gaining strength every hour, and was now running like a sluice past the extreme point of the island. The wind and sea had also gradually increased. When once a boat got out from under shelter, she was a hapless plaything for the winds and waves. She could neither be sailed nor pulled against the stream, and when she had chased, or intercepted and boarded one dhow, her work for the day was over, and it was very many hours before she could get back to her anchorage again.

Unless, therefore, very timely warning indeed could be given to the boats, so as to enable them to cut off a dhow at the earliest possible moment, it was next to useless sending them out at all. It therefore became important to establish that more complete system of look-out, by day on the high peak of the mainland, and by night on the island itself, which I have before mentioned as in contemplation. On the third day after our arrival the island was permanently occupied by a party of signallers armed with revolvers, and a small guard of riflemen. Their signal apparatus consisted of a lamp to 'wink' with at night, and a small flag on a staff by day. So provided, they would be able to convey to us, or to the boats, full information of all approaching vessels, and enable either to intercept them without any delay. While the look-out was

to be kept from the island at night, the party was each morning, at break of day, to toil up the peak and thence report to the ship, by signal, the results of a survey of the distant horizon.'

We now, therefore, settled down to a routine-like interception of the East African commerce. In the morning our shore station would report to us how many dhows were in sight; what was their direction: how far they were off, and their size and appearance. Then we warned the boats under the island, dispatched more boats from the ship, or got steam ready for a chase, as the case might be. At night we could not receive such timely notice, as the vessels must approach pretty close before they were seen, and it followed that the ship spent many of the night hours in chase of vessels which were not always overtaken. In the daytime, however, nothing could escape us; and every vessel which passed was either boarded and brought in for close examination, or passed as 'legal' by the officers commanding the boats.

Without a certain percentage of captures, the process we were carrying out would have soon become intensely wearying, as it certainly was for everyone intensely fatiguing, with a thermometer never below 80°, and seldom below 85°.

Such percentages fell into our hands, as I have already shown, by a close sifting of evidence. I may here describe the results of the process when the evidence was of a somewhat different kind.

It happened to be Sunday, and I daresay we should not have been indisposed for a quiet day, when our

signal station reported that there were two large dhows in sight, ten miles off, standing for the Cape. We were then informed that three more, twenty miles off, were coming. The boats were dispatched in time to intercept and board each group as it arrived. The first two were not from Africa and were allowed to pass. The second three were from Zanzibar. All had suspicious-looking negroes on board, and one of them a very suspicious-looking boy. They were therefore brought in to me, when two proved themselves to be legal traders, with no fresh exportations of the contraband article amongst their lading.[1] The captain of the third, being brought on board with the suspicious piece of humanity—proved to be a jaunty Arab, with a fine independent manner, the product either of conscious innocence or of conscious security. No wonder perhaps if it were the latter, as, in addition to the usual Zanzibar pass—quite understood by us now—he produced passes from two of those men-of-war who were assisting to spread the spider's web, and upon whose presumed operations, as responsible for the continued absence of full slavers, we looked with anything but friendly eyes. One of the passes was dated only the previous day, and both certified that the insect in question which had passed through their part of the web, was a fly, and no wasp. Such passes would have been conclusive had it not been for the presence of the suspicious negro, and, also perhaps, but for our jealousy of the warm corners apportioned to our rival spiders. However, it would be satisfactory to wipe these rivals'

[1] 'Punch' however (see *apud*), was positive that one of the two had landed slaves at Macullah.

eyes, and we fell to at what we supposed would be a close examination of the suspicious chattel.

He was the brightest and the blackest little negro we had yet seen in these waters; and, when brought before 'the court' and told to take it coolly, and not to be frightened, answered with a 'click'—a sound like that which a coachman uses to his horses—and waved his small hand in a contemptuous way as much as to say, 'When you begin to talk sense I'll listen to you; but when you speak to me of being frightened, your conversation is not interesting.'

He was under twelve years of age I should think, round and plump, and if he was not already known all through the ship by the name of 'Punch,' it did not take an hour longer to bestow that title on him.

His story was concise and straightforward. Carried not more than four days' journey from his native place to Kilwa, he was there shipped for Zanzibar, at which town he remained for a month, until one evening, being upon the shore, he suddenly found himself choked with a mouthful of flour, and carried on board the dhow in which we discovered him. The captain of the dhow had either bought, or otherwise provided himself with two more slaves at Zanzibar, but prudence determined him to let them come up in other vessels. When in the vicinity of each of the men-of-war whose passes had been produced, 'Punch' had spent his time under sundry bags of rice and other small matters. But on seeing our boats, the Arab captain, grown bold by his immunity, and trusting to his passes, had popped the slave into the Arab dress which he then wore. His ex-

pressed reflections according to Moosa being, 'S'pose Englishman see Arab coat, then he think all right—nigger Arab.' Tested with Arabic, Punch showed no comprehension, and so far confirmed his statement.

Next came in the jaunty Arab captain, calm and contemptuous. 'Had he not two English passes, and a negro in an Arab coat?'

Moosa had, meantime, made out that the Zanzibar pass mentioned the dhow's crew as consisting of fourteen men; and we could ourselves decipher the figures, though we were of course unable to say to what they referred. Word had in consequence been sent out to count the number of souls in the vessel, and the number had come back as seventeen. This was the handle we had to begin with in grinding our jaunty friend's nose.

'Well Moosa, now you tell this Arab captain his pass say got fourteen men: how got seventeen?'

'Yes I tell him' said Moosa.

'Yarrif?'

'Yarrif' returned the jaunty witness.

'Yarrif??'

'Yarrif.'

'Yar——?'

'Never mind any more "Yarrifing" Moosa, but ask him what I tell you.'

Moosa held a long conversation with the captain and then said.

'Oh, he say'—Moosa's finger sketched many diagrams on the table—'he say belong Suri.'

'Yes, all right Moosa, we shall come to that by-and-

by—but we want first to know where he got the three men over and above what the pass says?'

There was more converse and some altercation between Moosa and the Arab, then Moosa said:—

'Say take fourteen men from Sur, go Zanzibar: bring fourteen men Zanzibar: three men Macullah.'

'Ah! that's all right, now we shall pin him,' observed the Court. 'Get the whole crew on board at once, and separate them.'

This mandate uttered, the Court resumed its inquisition.

'Where did he get the slave boy?'

'He say boy no slaver, belati Suri—belong Sur.'

'Ask him if boy got a father at Sūr?'

'Father (of course) he dead.'

'Now tell him, suppose boy belong Sur, he speak Arabic.'

'He say "Yes, slaver savey Arab."'

'Very well; now let us have the boy in, and try him. But first—Moosa ask him if boy no savey Arab, whether it will be all right to burn his dhow?'

There was some altercation on this, but at last Moosa said,

'Yes, he say "All right; burn dhow suppose boy no speak Arab."'

The look with which, on his entry, our jaunty friend inspected little Punch, was not quite a pleasant one to see—I should not have felt comfortable in sending the pair out of my sight together; but Punch was absolutely undisturbed, and sat down easily on the deck at a little distance.

'Moosa! tell the captain to speak Arabic to the boy.'

On receipt of the interpreted direction, the Arab's brow grew dark, and he muttered some words to Punch in that extraordinary guttural tone I have only heard in an angry Arab throat. They sounded very like strong cursing, but they probably were not.

Punch regarded him without a wink.

The Arab became louder and more guttural—he shouted at the boy, but the boy stared full at him, and moved not a muscle. The Arab spoke to Moosa.

'Oh! he say boy afraid,' observed the latter.

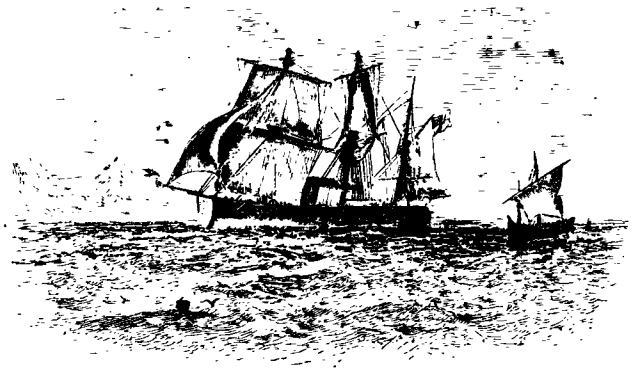
'Then ask the boy in Swahili whether he is afraid?'

The little fat object nearly laughed. 'He afraid at all this noise and nonsense? good gracious!'

'Well,' said the Court, 'tell Arab man, he see the boy no savey Arab—savey Swahili. Boy no belong Sur.'

Moosa after conference says—with his finger steadily down—'He no want say nothing more. Boy belong Sur; three men come from Macullah.'

The captain and boy were then dismissed and separated, after which we had each of the crew in one by one. Of course, although the story was partly got up amongst the crew, it was incomplete, and we were very soon able to separate the two passengers who really did come on board at Macullah. Most of the crew were ready to swear that three men, and not two, had so come on board as passengers, but unhappily for the dhow, they had omitted to settle who was the third: nor had they quite correctly rehearsed the point as to where the boy came from, and although



A SURRENDER.

one of the full-grown negroes fathered him, he could not get over the Arabic difficulty.

Finally, on these points being brought to the notice of our jaunty friend, he confessed that 'he speakee lie' as to the third passenger from Macullah, for that only two came on board there. Pressed again to confess that he stole the boy at Zanzibar, he declined to give any explanation, shrugged his shoulders, and asked that he and his crew might be sent on to Sur in a passing vessel. The expression he wore said in the plainest language 'You are going to burn the dhow: burn away if you like, but do not trouble me any more about it.'

Somehow—so much does mere manner weigh with us—when we got the dhow indifferently well scuttled in the afternoon, in the presence of the jaunty gentleman and his crew, I do not think we were at all unhappy that he should witness that little operation. Perhaps we considered it a wholesome commentary on the improper use of flour.[1]

Except for the serious interlude to be described in the next chapter, our life in the ant-lion's nest, was a mere repetition of what I have now written.

Incessant boardings of dhows; constant and prolonged examinations generally resulting in acquittal. Perpetual rushing to sea at all hours of day and night. An eternal weighing and anchoring. Changing a dry boat's crew, for a wet and exhausted one: substituting a fresh boat for one damaged under a rolling dhow. Noting a wind every day increasing, and a

[1] Slave robberies at Zanzibar are not unfrequently conducted in the manner described by 'Punch.'

coal supply every day decreasing. Such employments, varied perhaps with parting a cable, made the time seem long; and hardly one engaged in the service would believe when it was over, that we had only spent fifteen days in the ant-lion's nest.

CHAPTER XI.

DISASTER.

A WEEK had been spent in the incessant chasing, boarding, and occasional detaining and condemning of passing dhows, as detailed in the last chapter. Our signalling arrangements had worked uncommonly well, and, both by night and day, we had regularly received as much warning as could be given of the approach of vessels, which no doubt saved us much useless labour. Yet the work fell heavily on many of the officers and men. It was the duty of some to spend most hours of daylight exposed to the fierce rays of the sun, either on board the ship or on shore, and the exposure in the boats included constant wetting from the sea. It was not to be wondered at that heavy fevers should now and then appear: it was more a matter for congratulation how very slightly the work had told upon us.

Much of the result was due to the fact that there was just sufficient doubt about every third or fourth vessel boarded, to necessitate a close examination; and out of the vessels so examined, a sufficient proportion became prizes to keep up the excitement derivable from pure sport.

If, in the estimation of those who read these pages —so far removed mentally and locally from the scenes they describe—we should fall, by a certain confession, still I think that confession had better be made.

In our minds for the present, all questions of philanthropy, all sympathy with the misfortunes of the negro, all anger towards his oppressor, were merged in the single idea of the pursuit of game. The ordinary sportsman may, on the moor or in the cover, experience all the sensations of a slave-catcher when he has been a little time at the work. True, the feeling is wider and more absorbing in the slave-catcher, but it is not deeper or different in source.

The ordinary sportsman has, however, much the advantage in the satisfaction with which he views the result of the day's sport. He may lay out the spoils due to his skill and energy side by side, admiring the plumage of this, or the condition of that bird: and still his 'bag' has yet other useful conditions to fulfil in furnishing forth his table. The game has afforded him sport, and will afford him delicate food, and the sportsman may, in consequence, well assume that it has filled its place in the world. Not so with the slave-catcher's unhappy spoils. It is no part of the economy of nature that these should afford him sport; and once in his hands they can perform for him no useful office. Their labour might avail him, or others, were it not forbidden to be extracted beyond a very limited extent. It is because others purpose to extract it fully, that the slaves may lawfully fall into his hands. The game trapped must neither be used, nor left as useless; it must be

carried home, but it must not be dressed to furnish a banquet. The slave-catcher cannot flatter himself that his game when secured, has filled or will fill its place in the world.

These considerations, though they may touch us all when the excitements of the chase and its vicissitudes have come to an end, do but slightly affect us when in pursuit; and as we were eternally in pursuit and plotting for prey under Ras Madraka, the feeling of pure sport was generally uppermost.

It was perhaps such a feeling which caused me to awake somewhat earlier than usual one morning, and to rise off the plank which in these latitudes forms the wholesomest and most satisfactory bed. Daylight was just breaking as I took up a telescope with the view of noting whether the signalling party on shore were up to the mark, and to the height of their station at the appointed hour. Daylight came and showed no signs of the waving flag which ought to have been there. Broad daylight came, yet there was no appearance of the signal party. Under such conditions it is the naval commander's business to fume, and I presume I fumed according to rule. Possibly also, this process bred some confusion in the mind of the signalman beside me, whose office it was to keep his eye upon the signalmen on shore, and caused him to direct his attention elsewhere. However that be, it is certain that some sharp words reached him for not observing what I did, namely, that the waving flag had that moment begun to work vigorously on the high red peak on shore.

'Dhows in sight,' said the shore station.

'One large dhow, S.S.E.'

'Four dhows, S.W.'

'Which? or what on earth do they mean?' was the exclamation on board; 'tell them to repeat the last signal.'

'One dhow, south,' says the shore station, and presently follow the words:—

'Close to.'

'Signal the boats,' was now the order, and up went the signal which directed the boats under the island to give chase, and we soon saw them rapidly astir in pursuance of the order.

Very shortly afterwards we saw the triangular white sail flit across the opening between the mainland and the island, and conceal itself behind the latter.

'We shall catch her at any rate!' was the observation of those who saw her.

In a few minutes that which we had never seen before happened. The sail which had passed from right to left up the coast towards Ras-el-Hadd, now repassed the opening, from left to right, and became concealed behind the mainland. The ship owning the sail was making for the shore, and no vessel would so behave unless she had a full cargo of slaves on board.

'Tell the chief engineer to have steam as fast as he can: tell the boatswain to bring to the cable: let the carpenter rig the capstan: ask the first lieutenant to shorten in cable at once: and tell the navigating lieutenant!' Such are the sort of orders which issue from the proper authority, and are obeyed as soon as uttered. Steam not being ready by the time the

anchor is up, sail is made at first, but soon the *Dryad* rushed out of her corner under steam, to throw herself on that certainly illegal trader who could not be far off.

We had more than hopes that our friend was in the trap and would fall unto us as an easy prey. We knew that a bold rocky shore extended some distance to the westward on the sea face of Ras Madraka. No dhow would venture to run on shore there; it would be too mad even for an alarmed slave-trader. Beyond this rocky coast there was certainly an excellent beach—just the sort of beach an Arab chased by a man-of-war likes to have under his lee—but looking to the direction of the wind, the strong lee current and the position in which the dhow was when she hauled up for the shore, we did not think it possible she could have reached the nearest part of the beach.

Supposing, however, she could reach it, and could land her slave cargo, it was still a question whether she would do so. In this barren land food was not: miserable springs of water, bad and brackish, might be found by those who knew where to look for them at intervals of perhaps fifty miles. Sur was distant not less than 250 miles, and was perhaps the nearest point on arrival at which the merchandise could be considered safe. The journey lay through a country which, where inhabited at all, would probably be inhabited by plunderous enemies. On the whole it seemed to us that even an Arab who had lost his head, would possibly have instinct enough to make a virtue of necessity, and to surrender his dhow and his cargo

quietly. We consequently expected to find our friend anchored off the rocky coast, hoping against hope that he might lie there in peace till darkness should cover his movements and enable him to slip away unseen by the ant-lion.

At first, as we steamed along the coast, we saw nothing, and began to doubt whether our eyes had not altogether deceived us, but as we drew out from the land our attention was given to something the signal station was saying :—

'Dhow gone on shore.'

This puzzled us more than ever, inasmuch as we were in a better position for seeing such a thing than the station was. But we noticed also, with infinite disgust, that while we had supposed our signalmen pretty well hidden from the sea view, they in reality formed an object which was glaringly conspicuous, and could not fail to warn the captain of any approaching dhow, with illegal tendencies and a suspicious nature, that there were hawks abroad. However, it was too late to correct the error in the present instance. If our signalmen had flushed the game we were in pursuit of, earlier than it would otherwise have been, flushed it was, and there was an end of it; the point now was to find the dhow, and to come upon her so as to catch her. If we passed well out to sea, we might observe her the sooner, but if she were actually within reach of the beach and meant to run there, we should never be able to stop her in that way. We therefore crept as close to the rocky shore as we thought prudent, and

scrutinised every projecting headland, fancying we saw her in twenty places where she was not.

There were several other vessels passing up outside us, but we saw our two boats a long distance astern and in a position to intercept them. There were several more on the distant horizon to the westward. Neither of these groups must take our attention from this bird in hand, or this bird which would be in hand so very shortly. It was clear now, that if she had not disappeared in pieces on the rocks, the dhow had gained a position enabling her to run on the beach.

Two little preparations we made in case of accidents; one was to load and train a heavy gun, capable of throwing its projectile three miles, ready to frighten the crew of the vessel out of their senses by throwing shot over their heads. The other was to prepare a couple of boats with some extra lines and gear, in case there should be work to be done through the surf upon the beach.

I suppose a dozen voices combined to utter the exclamation 'There she is!' when the last projecting rock ceased to cover the object of our search. She had just gained the end of the beach clear of the rocky part, and was at anchor two or three hundred yards from it.

Instant commotion was visible on board the now undoubted full slaver. Her cable was cut or slipped in a moment, the gigantic yard rose upon the mast, and the great bellying sail swung and flapped to the fresh breeze. The dhow was making for the beach at all hazards.

'Give her a shot now—right over her!

The roaring rifle shot flies through the air, yards over the dhow, and buries itself far up the beach in the sand. Another flies after it, and another. If we were perfectly certain of hitting her, I do not doubt we should use the power: anything to stop the escape and the landing of her slaves.

But we have not the power of hitting her even if we should try. She flies towards the beach, and we see by her sudden heel that she has struck it.

And now we saw, pouring from her side, that hideous black stream, whose flow can be forgotten by him who has witnessed it only when all else is lost to his memory. Let him be as sceptical as he likes on the capacity of the negro; as cool as he may, on the policy of slave-trade suppression: he will lose himself in rage and resentment when he sees that horrible outpouring.

I have described it as a black stream, and it is that and nothing else, in appearance. It is black, and it is flowing: we can detect no more at the distance. That it is formed of men, women, and children like ourselves, we feel, but cannot see.

But, great heaven! the stream is flowing to its death. Without food, without water, and perhaps a three-hundred-mile march over a scorched rock before it, what hope is there for the wretched merchandise? 'Stopped they must be, if we can stop them,' such was our thought as we saw the stream, now spreading itself in rivulets over the broken shore, now gathering in pools, and waiting, still and dark.

The ship was driven up towards the dhow with the

full power of her available steam, having her boats ready with their crews, to dash through the heavy surf which lined the beach. The moment she reached a proximity to the shore beyond which it was not safe to take her, two light boats pushed off and made for the beach with the speed due to powerful frames in strong excitement. A third boat followed to receive rescued slaves, and form a guard over the boats on shore. She anchored outside the surf.

Meantime the ship herself was not idle in her efforts. She had anchored, and the long-range guns, with battering charges, threw shot after shot over, and far beyond the fleeing negroes. Checked by the crash of a shot upon the rocks in their proposed path to the left, the wayward, and now broken-up crowd, fled to the right. A shell bursting in the air half a mile in front, turned it, as a flock of pigeons is turned, straight inland: a shot over them again, and casting up a fountain of yellow dust as it fell, huddled the creatures together in one spot. It was death to advance in any direction: we were afterwards told, they believed it death to remain, and fall into the hands of the English.

But now, all that could be done was done. The two boats had gained the beach, their officers and crews were in hot pursuit inland, and amongst the foremost of them the slim figure of Bin Moosa with his loins girded, showed conspicuous in the telescopic field. One of the two boats was seen to have passed behind the beached dhow, and was hauled up on the sand. The other we knew had dropped an anchor outside the surf, and we expected to see her speedily

hauled out in safety to it. There was however a delay which could not be at first explained, but we presently saw the second boat swing out to her anchor, empty and full of water. She had swamped in the surf.

We could now observe the officer in charge of the beach collecting the two or three hands who were left to guard the boats, and taking them to a point opposite to where the swamped boat lay. We could notice they were battling in the surf for something it held like a prey: drawn out at last, we saw it was a dead body. We hoped it might not be an English one, but the dress was unmistakeable. Lay it down: lay it gently down upon the sand. It is the abandoned temple of a fine young spirit, and the first sacrifice we have offered to the African Moloch!

We were oppressed by such a thought as this, and full of inquiries amongst ourselves as to the cause of the loss we had sustained, and of surmise as to how the pursuit on shore would fare, when our attention was drawn to the group of dhows I have before spoken of as visible earlier in the day, on the distant horizon. They were drawing near us, and the question was, would the boats we had left at Ras Madraka be able to board and overhaul them? Suddenly, while yet we were examining them through our glasses, one of the dhows hauled to the wind and made for the beach, some miles from the ship. She was clearly another full slaver, and she ran a great chance of reaching the shore ere we could cut her off.

The whole current of our thoughts was instantly changed. In fifteen minutes we were in hot pursuit:

the furnaces roaring below, and the guns roaring upon deck. The boats and the party on shore must shift for themselves now: the game was afoot and we were after it. The vessel was on our left and the shore on our right, we might yet cut her off from it. How her great sail bellied as she staggered along! A shot has gone over her; but in firing it we have been obliged to yaw the ship, and we lose ground in doing so. Nevertheless we are within range.

'Put a shot under her bows, that may stop her!'

The ship yawed again and the shot flew shrieking through the air. It almost splashed the water on board her, yet when the smoke had cleared away, the dhow was still steadily making for the shore. Should we cut her off? that was the question: there was yet a chance, but it was fast becoming a poor one. We were as close to the shore as we dared to go, and if we could not either stop her, or gain upon her more than we were doing, there was great fear.

'Things cannot be worse than they are for the unfortunate wretches—*try and hit her.* A shot through her sail may stop them.'

Again the shot flew, but this time wide of the mark. The dhow held on her course. When should we have the extra speed the third boiler previously ordered, would give us? unhappily water takes time to heat, we cannot increase our speed, and the dhow is nearing, always nearing the shore, faster than we can approach her.

It was all over: we had chased for an hour, and the dhow had crossed our path ahead, and was already in

the surf. The spot she was driven to was broken and rocky, and almost while we looked at her she was changing to a wreck. But the black stream—the horrible black stream—it was flowing fast enough, gushing from her side, like the blood from a gasping wound it oozed and spouted. Here there was no chance of stopping its flow. We had no boat left except a little dingey, quite unfit for such work; nor had we officers or men sufficient, supposing even we could have transported them through the surf. We waited till the last drop of black blood was wrung out from timbers now a shapeless mass of ruin, and then turned slowly back to our former anchorage.

I should mention that just as we were starting after this second slaver, a recall signal, previously arranged, had been made from the ship in order to prevent the party in pursuit on shore from wandering too far in the eagerness of the chase. After we had started in pursuit ourselves in the ship, we were pleased to see the shore party returning towards the beach with a goodly following of rescued blacks. The large boat which I have described as being placed outside the surf had been furnished with a heavy anchor, one which had formed part of the equipage of our jaunty Arab's vessel, and she had been also provided with lines and buoys to float on shore, in order that the boats there might get through the surf in safety. Such precautions were the more necessary, as every hour since we had left Ras Madraka the wind, sea, and surf, had all been rising. On returning therefore, we hoped to find the boats, their crews, and the rescued slaves,

ready to be taken on board. The swamped boat we hoped to find with the other two, for we had been witness of preparations on shore for her recovery. We in the ship could do nothing but look on.

It was not reassuring therefore, to see hardly a vestige of the dhow remaining on the beach; to see the swamped boat lying half in and half out of the water, evidently abandoned as useless; to observe the large boat labouring heavily towards us by herself, and to make out no signs of the second boat at all. Worst of all was it to see a group of twenty of our own men on the beach, with the surf between them and the ship and no known means for them to come to us, or for us to succour them.

The unhappy story was told to us by those in the approaching boat. The swamped boat had, with the assistance of our gallant Kroomen from the beach, been brought to the shore with the idea of baling her out and launching her. From a peculiarity in her construction, water once taken into parts of her interior could not be readily discharged. She was found too heavy to be moved when she reached the shore, and the rolling surf had crushed and strained her till she became a wreck.

Fifty-eight negroes had been rescued, and they were sent off in instalments to the boat lying outside the surf for the purpose of receiving them. The last journey included all who had remained on the shore till then; and they were within a moment's reach of safety outside the surf, when a towering wave broke upon them, filled and upset the boat, and threw its living contents

into the water. This fresh disaster cost another English life, and that of two or three slaves. That it was no worse, was due to a gallantry of the more powerful swimmers which is seldom wanting in Englishmen, and which in such cases is always prominent in the negro Kroomen.

I have twice mentioned this section of our crew; and the part they played in mitigating the disasters of the day brings them so prominently on the stage, that here I shall speak of them at large. What I say in their praise will be borne testimony to by every Naval officer who has experience of those most useful, excellent men.

Kroomen were, I believe, originally a tribe of negroes inhabiting the coast line about Sierra Leone. When that settlement was first occupied under the auspices of Mr. Wilberforce, Mr. Granville Sharpe, and those other philanthropists who, nearly a century ago, turned English attention to an earnest suppression of the export trade in negroes, Sierra Leone became the head-quarters of the Tribe, which was thus specially under the protection of the English. Negro labour was required in the men-of-war employed on the West Coast of Africa in suppressing the slave trade, in order to relieve the Englishmen from an exposure fatal to their health in such a climate; and by degrees, I believe, the custom grew up of employing these Kroomen. The chief sent a gang of his own choosing on board the ship requiring their labour, under charge of a 'Head Krooman,' as he was called in the navy. The head Krooman was entirely responsible to the officers of the ship for the behaviour of

his men, and I believe was formerly accustomed to deal out to them a discipline of the severest form. When the ship was ordered home, she discharged her complement of Kroomen at Sierra Leone; and gradually there grew up there a colony of these men who had served in the navy. Fathers who had passed years on board ship begat sons who followed their fathers' profession, and the race became of the navy, naval. I have been told that Krootown, at Sierra Leone, administered despotically as a rather extensive man-of-war, is a sight worthy the attention of the student of negro nature, and as showing the power of proper discipline over it for good.

All ships on the West Coast of Africa, and now all ships on the East India station, are furnished with a number of these Kroomen. They are, when on board, in precisely the same position as the rest of the crew, except that they mess by themselves, and maintain their own discipline under the officers of the ship. Their provisions are the regular ration issued to all. Their pay varies from eleven pence, to one shilling and eleven pence per day. They dress as seamen, and are as neat in their dress as any other men. They are always good-tempered: they work from daylight till dark at the hardest work in the ship, chattering merrily the whole time, and never complain. They are proud of their position, and of their work; and when there is anything dangerous to be done, in the way of battling with the water, there is no one so ready, no one so quietly determined as the Krooman. Amongst the blue-jackets they are universal favourites; their high qualities have been officially and publicly recorded by naval officers

of all ranks, and if there be an eminently satisfactory figure on which the eye may rest in the dubious picture of African nature, it may be found in the Krooman on board an English man-of-war.

These were the men to whom, as forming part of the crew struggling to reach the land after the destruction of the second boat, more than one owed their rescue. We shall again see them perilling their lives in the same service.

The tale brought to us by the solitary boat which was fit to be used now, by no means relieved our anxiety relative to the party cut off from us on shore. They were without provisions, water, or arms, for these had all gone down in the second boat. It was growing dusk, and we had nothing that we knew of at first capable of conveying either necessary through the surf. There were two Arab crews on shore, enraged by loss and disaster. There might be, we did not know how much, wild Arab force at hand. The wrecked Arab crews would certainly have preserved that which our men had lost—their arms.

What if, maddened by defeat, and having knowledge of our disaster, these men should take a desperate revenge?

Here again was the excellent Krooman ready. We had a small canoe, preserved for ship's use from the destruction of a previous prize. Jim George the head Krooman, and another, were ready to make the attempt of forcing it, either top or bottom upwards, through the surf, with such things as we should secure within it thoroughly protected from being wet.

Two or three rifles, a supply of ammunition, some biscuit, and a small keg of water, were securely lashed inside the canoe, and she started away, driven swiftly and skilfully over the sea by the Kroomen's paddles. There was light enough for us to see hope disappear in the surf. The canoe and its occupants were whirled over and over in the first roller, and were hidden from our view.

The succeeding quarter of an hour was as anxious a one as could well be spent by any person responsible for lives in jeopardy. We had written a note, secured in waterproof, to the officer in charge of the shore party, to fire a rifle twice if those sent reached his hands. Some time we watched in vain for the signal, but at last it came, and we understood that our gallant negroes had been faithful to their trust, and had succeeded in pushing the canoe, even bottom upwards, through the surf to the shore.

Two or three rifles in the hands of Englishmen, were, we very well knew, a good match for a score in the hands of Arabs. If the latter had sinister intentions, the very firing of two shots might warn them off, for they had no means of knowing that only two or three men possessed such arms. Still the beach was exposed; and even while we were hoping that our party might take up a more defensible position on the rocks to the right, we were gladdened by the sight of a blue light from the very spot where we wished our party to be. This told us, not only where they were, but that they had recovered one of the boat's magazines, and consequently had abundance of ammunition.

Thus we lay all night, hoping for the best, and considering how communication or rescue could be arranged, when daylight should arrive.

We were astir betimes next morning, to notice that there was more wind, more sea, and very much more surf. At early dawn we saw our party on shore descending from the rocky fortress where they had spent the night. We knew, or surmised, that some had lost their lives in the last mishap: how many there were alive, we could count. Happily—very happily we then thought—only one more Englishman was missing. As we learnt later, he had barely escaped with his life, being unable to swim, in the swamping of the first boat; he had now fallen a sacrifice to a lack of the same art in the swamping of the second boat.

It was hopeless to think of communicating except by signal with the shore party. They must find their way round to Ras Madraka bay, distant perhaps ten miles by land. A string of coloured flags representing the letters M.A.R.C.H. was run up to the mast-head; it was seen from the shore and answered, and the party threw itself into marching order for the start. The ship then went back to her anchorage under Ras Madraka.

What we on board were afraid of—and the fear was by no means groundless—was the chance of attack which the party ran in the wild and rocky defiles through which it must pass. Their weakness in arms must have been evident to any Arab observer; their way over the hills was absolutely unknown to them; and a very clumsy ambush might have shot down every soul with impunity.

Under such circumstances there was no uncommon feeling of relief on board, when, after some six hours' march, the party were seen approaching the beach close to our anchorage, safe and sound. Happy, very happy, we were that matters had been no worse. And although we mourned the loss of two members of our little community, we had been in a condition to fear a calamity so much greater that the certain knowledge of only two lives being sacrificed was comfort. It appeared that the shore party had been very much befriended by the two or three natives of whom we had made allies; these showed them a little spring of water and guided them in safety across the hills.

Thus ended our worst and our best day under Ras Madraka. We had destroyed two full slave vessels, and had rescued sixty out of perhaps three hundred negroes forming their cargoes. But the per contra was sadly heavy—two English lives and two boats.

There was, besides, the very unsatisfactory reflection that the fate of those negroes who had been driven on shore was probably ten times as bad as it would have been had it not been their fortune to meet an English man-of-war.

CHAPTER XII.

FALLING BACK TO THE PORT OF ADJUDICATION.

THE increase of wind and sea, the decrease of coal, and the loss of our lightest and best boats for chasing, determined an early move towards our port of adjudication, Aden; and on May 12 we quitted Ras Madraka, not to return thither.

As yet, however, we were far from leaving our cruising ground, or ceasing to look on the capture of dhows as our one object in life. All that we intended to do was to draw down towards the western limit of our station, so that when the condition of things became such as to make it absolutely necessary to give up slave catching, we might have as short a voyage to Aden as possible.

Our first station was some ninety miles farther west —Ras Saukirah, and we lay there just as we had done under Ras Madraka: but we had not the conveniences of the latter place. We were not so well hidden, and it was not the habit of the dhows to pass so close to this point. Still, the eternal weighing, steaming out in chase, boarding and dismissing of legal traders went on as usual, without, however, any result in the shape of prizes.

Having chased a distant dhow, just before dark one

evening, and having lost her just after it, we determined —being so far from the anchorage—not to return to it, and we consequently beat about under sail between the Kooria Mooria Islands and the mainland. Here we might, or might not, come across anything worth looking after. The water space was open, and slavers might pass left or right of us without being perceived—or, if perceived, without being chased unless near enough to give a moderate chance of success. All that came anywhere in our way, were boarded as usual, more as a matter of duty than with the keen anticipation of ultimate capture with which we had begun this wearying process. Nearly everyone was thoroughly beaten for the time. The constant strain upon the attention, and the really hard physical conditions, had more or less damaged most of us. We had lost all belief in slave trading; and though the slaves already rescued were on our decks, we looked on them as absolute exceptions to the general rule. I think we had in some sort forgotten that in less than a month—it was now May 18—we had captured two vessels, and driven on shore two others, and that, as things went, few ships could expect to do more.

Steam was up, and the ship flying through the water at a few minutes' notice so often every day and night, without anything coming of it, that on the afternoon of May 18, my order for immediate steam created no sensation in the ship. I had undergone, however, some sensation myself just before giving the order, and this was the cause of it:—

I had been on the bridge, spying about with my

telescope, especially spying at a dhow ten or twelve miles off and which was right ahead of the ship running towards her. Something, I do not know what, caused me to watch her narrowly, and after some moments, I saw her 'yaw' considerably, and then come back to her course again. The action was that of a vessel whose commander was doubting in his mind whether to near us, or to avoid us. I felt absolutely certain this vessel had slaves on board, and therefore ordered steam as before mentioned.

For perhaps a quarter of an hour nothing happened, and I judged there was a feeling in the ship that we were engaged in another useless chase; however, at the end of that time the dhow altered course decidedly towards the shore, which was perhaps fifteen miles distant.

Still we were so tired out with useless chasing, that I believe I was alone in feeling absolute certainty of a prize. My order for a third boiler, with all despatch, seemed however to awake those in the ship to a consciousness that there was really sport toward, and in a few minutes there were a dozen telescopes all pointing towards the dhow. The latter was now without doubt stretching across for the shore, and moreover our relative positions made it quite possible that she might reach it before we came up with her. An investigation of the chart showed a very excellent beach, for which we judged the dhow was running, although the shore was too distant to allow of our seeing which was cliff, and which beach. That we were in for an exciting chase was now evident to the owners of the

telescopes; and a further order to push the fires to their extreme, and hasten the third boiler, spread the excitement to every corner of the ship.

Only one thing damped our ardour. The dhow had two masts, and no sail was yet set on the second, or smaller mast. Could it be after all that she was a legal trader, only altering course for her own purposes irrespective of our presence? While we were in the midst of such speculations, down came the dhow's single sail, and she lay apparently waiting our arrival. Everyone shut up their glasses in disgust. Either she was a legal trader, not willing to give us trouble, or she was a slaver meanly surrendering, without giving us more than a moment's excitement. Who would go a-fishing salmon if the fish gave no 'play'?

But what was happening about the second mast? A sail was rising on it; and on the foremast, a second and larger sail was rising also. The dhow had changed her night for her day sail, and meant business after all.

The old *Dryad* was now making some commotion in the water. Nine knots; nine and a half; ten. Keep it up, good ship, till we get the third boiler! We shall have steam in it in a quarter of an hour, and then we shall go!

We were still a long way out of range for the guns, and even were we within range of the heavy guns, things are not yet come to such a pass as to call for their use. But we had our little boat's gun so placed as to fire right ahead of the ship; and a good shot was stationed at it, ready to burst a succession of shells over

the heads of the Arabs and frighten them into submission, should there be necessity for it.

The chart was again in close and anxious request. The supposed distance of the dhow from the nearest beach compared with our own from the same spot, differed so much in the dhow's favour, that there was every doubt as to whether, using all our available steam and sail, we should cut her off at present speed. Our gain upon the dhow herself was trifling. When should we have this third boiler, or when would the wind help us by falling lighter?

Presently we knew by the increased violence and rapidity of the strokes of the screw, that the third boiler was beginning to do its work.

'What is she going?'

'Ten and a half. Eleven. Eleven and a half.' Now we *are* going. The foam was flying from our bows, and the old ship trembling with the excitement of the pursuit. That third boiler was a godsend; we were gaining on the chase.

Soon we were nearly within range, and began to ply the flying dhow with shot and shell from the little gun forward.[1] We could tell by the splash of the former in the water, and the burst of the latter in the air, how fast we were at last closing upon our quarry; there was now every chance of cutting her off from the land, especially as the wind was falling lighter. Those in the dhow knew it, and we soon had evidence that the shells were not pleasant. The game was up for them,

[1] The scene is most truthfully pictured in the plate; for which I am indebted to the kindness of Lieutenant W. Henn.

THE CHASE. *From a Picture by* Lieut. W. HENN, R.N.

and down came her sails. There she lay, a ruined speculation: a disastrous adventure in smuggling.

It did not take us very long to reach her; but before we did so the gunwale of the dhow was lined with woolly heads, their owners, in view of the impending break up, being licensed to do as they pleased. It was a mere matter of business to get the vessel alongside, to take her crew of twenty Arabs and her cargo of one hundred and thirteen plump, well-fed, healthy-looking negroes out of her; then, it was equally a matter of business to make a target of the wrong-doing craft, until she turned over with a groan and sank, never to rise again.

The captain and crew of this dhow were the coolest Arabs I had met. The former could speak Hindostanee, and talked of his loss as one of those to which his business was occasionally liable, and which he would readily make up for next time. I suspect he was not the owner of the cargo. Perhaps, however, the coolest part of their whole conduct was exhibited in their sending a deputation to me next day, to complain that they had no curry for dinner, only the same food as the slaves. With the willing assistance of Bin Moosa I explained that, as in our fancy a certain process involving a stout rope and a yard-arm was a fitting one to be undergone by them, I did not quite see what line of argument they could take which would induce me to consider the curry question. They entirely recognised the force of my remarks, and we heard no more from them until their departure for Sur, as usual in a passing legal trader. Then, the Arab captain wished us

good-bye in the friendliest way, shaking hands with several of the officers, and directing Moosa to inform me that he had the highest opinion of my talents and conduct, and that he should not be unwilling to renew so pleasant an acquaintance provided the circumstances were not in all respects similar to those which had occasioned the present happiness.[1]

Our general feeling now was that at least we might hold our heads up when our enemies should speak with us in the gate at Aden. It was not likely that many of our brother spiders would have caught more wasps than we had; and though we might have done better, certainly we might have done worse. Therefore, although the advancing dhows were as thick as ever, with no appearance of a cessation of the trade, we had few regrets when the report of our coal supply, and the strong breezes we experienced, warned us it was time to be off to Aden.

On May 24 we finally gave up chasing and boarding; and on the 28th we anchored at Aden, our port of adjudication.

Here we had an assemblage of spiders, and a great comparing of notes as to the efficiency of the different parts of the web. The southernmost ship had met two full slavers off Ras Assuad on the African Coast, who had only asked 'which side they were to come' for discharging their cargoes, amounting to 420 slaves. The ship at Ras Hafoon had picked up a dhow

[1] I have in my possession a volume of light literature—the 'Arabian Night's Entertainments,'—with which this gentleman solaced his leisure hours.

with 236. The ship at Macullah had captured three dhows with 57 slaves. The ship further east, one dhow with seventy-nine, and lastly we ourselves had captured three dhows, had run on shore and destroyed two, and had rescued 175 slaves.

The total was heavy, and showed a well spread web. Thirteen dhows destroyed, and 967 slaves released in the space of less than one month, was at least a vigorous carrying out of the British policy of forcibly destroying a condemned trade.

Each ship's slaves were transferred, immediately on arrival, to the civil authorities at Aden, who transported them for the present to an island in the harbour, known by the name of Slave Island.

I am tempted to wonder now how it was I never had the curiosity to visit this island, but when the temptation comes over me, a glance at the state of the thermometer as recorded in my diary dispels it. A maximum heat of 95° and a minimum of 86° will account for poor humanity omitting many things more important than a visit of curiosity to the 'Prison'[1] in which rescued slaves are detained at Aden. There is, however, very little to describe about the island. It is as barren as the rest of Aden, that is, as barren as a cinder; and a few large open sheds make a sufficient shelter for the negroes by night. Food is supplied in sufficient quantities by contract, and the negroes lead a lazy, useless life upon the island, until despatched to Bombay. I was told generally, that numbers of slaves disappeared, both from the island, and after apprentice-

[1] Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 7.

ship to residents at Aden. It was supposed they made their way—not unwillingly—into the hands of Arabs; and found their ultimate destiny in that domestic slavery in the interior of Arabia, from which they had been temporarily withheld by capture at sea.

No process can be more simple or less formal than that of adjudicating in the Aden Prize Court on cases of undoubted slave-trading. Our cases were all such, for our chief evidence was the personal presence of slaves. In only one case was there likelihood of dispute, namely, in that of our first capture in the Persian Gulf; and here the opposite side would not argue the question of whether the case was one of slave-trading or no—the slave was there to answer all doubts on that head—but whether there had been any breach of treaty or of national rights, by the capturing ship. The opposite side was not, therefore, the owner of the vessel, but the Persian Government; and as it could not be represented before the Prize Court, a formal decree must follow in this, as in all similar cases.

At Aden, where the official community is very small, it is necessary that a legal Prize Court shall be formed of the simplest elements. The Resident (the civil governor) is *ex-officio* the judge of the Court, and practically he is the whole Court—vice-admiral, judge, and registrar. The Court is held generally in one of the rooms of the Residency, or other convenient place.

The forms are very simple. The Court is prayed to exercise its jurisdiction; and the Captain of the capturing vessel, or other officer deputed by him, together with the necessary witnesses, attend on a given day

with certificates of the number of slaves taken out of the vessels, the measurements of the latter, and a certificate of their destruction. The witnesses—one or two—then state, on oath, the circumstances of the capture; and if the case is clear, a decree of condemnation of the vessel as lawful prize to the capturing ship, follows immediately.

In the six cases of capture, or destruction, which we offered for adjudication, it was necessary only to take formal evidence, the whole thing was over in an hour and a half, and we returned to the ship, happy, in the possession of documents equivalent to a demand on the English Treasury for about 2,200*l.*

This was the last act of our northern slave-trade suppressing. Our only object in visiting Aden was to land our slaves, condemn our dhows, and take in coal. All three matters having been concluded to our satisfaction, we quitted Aden on June 9; and after the usual battle with the calms and uncertain breezes of the Gulf of Aden, fell into the strength of the S.W. monsoon, and rolled along cheerfully towards Trincomalee in Ceylon.

CHAPTER XIII.

SLAVES ON BOARD SHIP.

As we were able, in the monotonous interval of a voyage from Aden to Bombay, to consider at large the nature of the northern slave traffic, and the powers possessed by the English navy for its forcible interruption; so now, when a still more monotonous journey is in course of accomplishment, we may cast about for something to fill up the time. Nothing seems so *apropos* as a sketch of the behaviour of those whom our action rescued, and who were compulsorily our guests for a few weeks. I doubt if anyone has yet sketched this scene in the great drama of the slave trade. My 'experiences' would certainly not be complete without it; and yet I feel so distinctly that much of what I have to say will find little echo, will offend some, and will not satisfy others, being not altogether what is expected, that I doubt about the policy of attempting the subject.

Yet it can neither be uninteresting nor unimportant to learn what happens to the rescued slave on board a man-of-war—how he behaves, and what is the impression produced on an ordinary mind, by the singular spectacle it witnesses.

I am sure it is not without trepidation, that the

commander of a man-of-war first faces the knowledge that, in an hour or less, the numbers in his ship will be doubled or trebled by the advent of a captured cargo of blacks. If he be enthusiastic, the idea of freedom suddenly bestowed by his action on fellow-creatures who have been forcibly deprived of the gift, and the pleasure he anticipates from the expressed gratitude of those rescued, may for the moment prevent him from going beyond such thoughts. If he be practical, and yet without personal knowledge of the matter, he will fear several troubles. He will certainly fear the importation of disease. The small sick-list, and healthy appearance of his ship's company, which he attributes to some pet regulation of his own—some arrangement for sleeping in the air, or out of the air; some granting or withholding of leave, and so on,—he will fear to see change for the worse, in spite of all precautions. Small-pox, perhaps cholera, in a raging and violent form, may be latent in the black cargo even now approaching his ship. Some disease of an infectious type he looks for as a certainty—how to begin and where to end he knows not. He has perhaps heard much of shackles and slave-irons, and pictures to himself a race of beings so goaded beyond endurance by the deprivation of their liberty, that the rebound will produce for him a cargo of mutineers. At best he fears the crowding, the dirt, and discomfort which must be the result in any case.

If he is eminently practical and of a commercial turn of mind, his speculations will be confined to the con-

sideration of the number of head on board the prize, and the calculable bounty thereon payable.

I supposed that not even in the last case—for the bounty always comes in fact below the calculated theoretical value—do things turn out as he anticipates.

His first surprise no doubt will be as mine was, that whereas he expects to ship a cargo of slaves, he in reality ships a cargo of women and babies. What sort of mutinous trouble can such create? As to disease—well, he may and does no doubt meet with it, but I have seen my own and three other ships together, all with newly rescued cargoes on board, amongst whom disease of an infectious character was not prominent enough to attract attention, if it were present at all. In my own ship, with two full cargoes and some strays, there was no disease of the expected kinds; only one which has become a political power in England of late. Of the other minor disagreeables—dirt and overcrowding, he will certainly be surprised to find how small they are in comparison with the numbers he carries.

If he be enthusiastic, it will not take five minutes to cure him. In the faces of the first half-dozen of his rescued ones who come over the gangway, he may look for some signs of relief, some expression of delight, some sentiment of gratitude—he will cease to seek for such things ever after. It will begin to dawn on him that all men are not on the same intellectual level; and that there are some natures on which the most astounding vicissitudes will produce much the same internal effect as rain produces on glass. There will possibly be in his cargo some one or two children, girls perhaps, boys

more probably according to my experience, in whose countenances a flicker of intelligence may shine. Such will attract immediate attention ; but in the mass, an impenetrable stolidity of countenance discloses the awful desert of no-thought within.[1] I hope I may be forgiven the simile, which is not unkindly meant—but I sometimes think I see in my dog's wistful eye something more of apprehension of surrounding circumstances than I could detect when I looked for it in the face of the ordinary rescued slave.

I have no knowledge of the free negro in his native land. I know him to be not unintelligent-looking in a state of slavery such as I see all over the East. The negro Kroomen I carried as part of my ship's company were—if not as bright as white men—still bright. If the ordinary rescued slave be brought to the pass in which we see him when released, by the process of capture and transport he has undergone, then I should be inclined to cry out for the extermination of his persecutor, and to carry ruthless fire and sword into his camp. But I have the temerity to doubt it. What I saw in the faces of these creatures was not suffering, but want of idea. Some, a few, were suffering bodily

[1] Our little friend 'Punch' already described as the sharpest negro we had seen, and another boy rescued the previous year, were taken by some of the officers to the railway station at Mauritius. The sight called up absolutely no ideas in their minds which were expressed in their conduct. They were neither alarmed, nor amused, nor surprised. It was as though they saw nothing.

On the other hand, a friend informs me that a son of King Bell on the West Coast who had been brought to England by some missionaries for his education, was so alarmed at the sight of a locomotive, that he straightway fled away. He had been already taught: our boys had not: will that account for the difference?

from hunger. When I first saw them, I could but say there was a duller look about them than about some of the others who were well-favoured. It was perhaps the grown men who were dullest, and though it is a mere notion of my own, I have the impression that those latest from Africa were the worst of all. As to the general appearance of the younger children, I may quote a not unsympathetic voice from the banks of the Zambesi, which exactly describes them: 'The little children look so strange, all stomach and head.' They are exceedingly like unfledged birds in fact, nor does their general demeanour altogether contradict their appearance.

Perhaps my chief doubt as to the effect of capture, of transport, or of slavery on the negro, arises from the change I have observed in the countenances and demeanour of the boys of the Central African Mission. When the least intelligent Africans I have seen seem to me those which have come latest from the interior, and when I afterwards see types of the same class developed by discipline and education, what idea can I form but that almost any change from the interior of Africa is for the African a change for the better?

The lack of idea shows itself in other ways besides the appearance. The stillness of the children is one of these. Except in rare cases the rescued slave child is as still as the grown man, and much more still than the grown Englishman. But stillness is a leading characteristic of any slave cargo, throughout its items.

I think the ordinary English reader, if asked to

picture the behaviour of a crew of rescued slaves when first taking their places in a man-of-war, would certainly expect to hear that 'curiosity' was roused in at least some of the rescued ones. He would reflect that, the sight of a man-of-war, the movement, the utter newness and strangeness of the scene, would touch the bump of inquisitiveness in at any rate some of those specimens of humanity. Every object in view is uncommon; every sound is novel. The ponderous engines are in easy view of the rescued, and are working smoothly and steadily at their task. One would expect some faint tendency to at least surprise. I do not remember to have ever seen the very smallest sign of such a thing. The utmost show of interest in surrounding objects was manifested by one or two of the younger men, in their assisting to haul on such ropes as in the working of the ship happened to come near them. I do not know now whether I had any real grounds for the impression: but I conceived that such men had been longer from the interior of Africa than the others.

The docility of rescued slaves is marvellous—docility, that is, in passiveness. I have no knowledge of what they might be if called on for action of any continuance. Again I must apologise for the simile which comes to my mind—their docility is very like that of sheep, and sometimes the method necessarily employed in conveying our wishes to their minds sadly resembled what we should have done to a veritable flock.

I find an expression coming from residents in Central Africa in relation to the negro there, which corresponds with my own experience. 'The very foun-

dations of propriety have to be laid amongst them.' I think that anyone who has personal knowledge, and will undertake the difficult task of disabusing his mind of the sentiment which he will find strongly colouring all he sees about the rescued slave, will bear me out in the matter; and when you come to deal with a full-grown man for the offences which you naturally object to in a house dog, the point is very strongly impressed on you.

I must not, however, be misunderstood here. In the course of my experience I have met low races in various parts of the world: such races as I should characterise as savage. I have seen a girl, educated in an English school up to the age of fourteen or fifteen, and dressed as a European till then. I have seen this girl wallowing in mud by the road side, clothed in a foul, filthy sheepskin. She had absolutely relapsed into savage life. I should not expect to see such a relapse in the negro. Again, the lowest race I ever saw inhabited Port Essington, in North Australia: they are the only race I have met where the modesty of the woman was absent. Nowhere else in the world have I seen the sexes absolutely undistinguished by a particle of clothing. In these matters the rescued slave is very different. I should have said on a casual acquaintance with the Aborigines of Australia, that the task of civilisation would be hopeless with them. On an equally casual acquaintance with the negro, fresh from the interior of Africa, I should have said that there was abundance of capability in him to receive the impress of civilisation, provided proper means were taken.

In laying these foundations of propriety, it is sometimes difficult to know what to do from the impossibility of making an appeal which will be understood by minds to which the most elementary ideas are foreign. Of course you may employ the rough and ready measures with the whip which you would take with your dog, but I have observed that pity for the condition of these creatures forbids it; and where one would not hesitate to apply dog-like chastisement to a British boy, we hesitate in the instance of a rescued negro slave. I remember a case of this nature, where a dog-like repetition of the offence by a full-grown male caused an appeal to me as to what was to be done with him.

As I approached with Bin Moosa, the negro was half reclining against the ship's side.

'Tell him to get up, Aggis.'

In a previous chapter I have pointed out that many of the negroes have a fashion of expressing careless denial, or contempt, by a sound like that which we use to horses—a sort of 'click.' My present friend being spoken to by Bin Moosa, and understanding him, replies by a 'click' and lies still.

It expresses the Militia Colonel's reply to Sir Hussey Vivian, when ordered to make his men form square. 'I'll do very well as I am, Sir Hussey.'

I. 'Tell him again to get up, Moosa.'

The Negro. 'Click.'

I. 'Ask him what he means by doing that again.'

The Negro. 'Click.'

I. 'Tell him if he does it again, I shall have him tied up.'

The Negro. 'Click!'

I. 'Tell him if I catch him at such tricks again he shall be whipped!'

The Negro. 'Click!'

I. 'Tell him I shall stop his rice!'

The negro no sooner gathers the import of these words than he is up like a shot, and promises complete amendment, which he afterwards displays. So that we generally understand that the stoppage of food is the simple and only way of dealing discipline to the rescued slave as we find him.

We have heard something of late, of the beauty of the East Africans from the Lake District. I cannot doubt that if an average specimen of these Africans could be placed suddenly, just as he or she appears as a rescued slave, plump, well fed and cared for, on a London platform, there would be a cry of 'What a frightful object!'

If, however, the audience were prepared beforehand, the object would no longer be 'frightful' but one to be certainly pitied—perhaps admired. No one knows better than the naval officer, how absolutely comparative beauty is. He falls in love with a face in a distant colony, and wonders at himself when he sees the same face in a London drawing-room. Therefore, although we may charge upon some writers a neglect of remembering the English idea of beauty when speaking of the Lake District negro, we must allow for the absence

GALLA SLAVES ON BOARD H.M.S. 'DAPHNE.' *From a Photograph by* Capt. SULIVAN, R.N.

of such standard when they write, and the strange sentiment which surrounds the subject.

If we take the English ideal of beauty, the Galla slaves exported from Brava, much more nearly approach it than the negro farther south. Burton says that the Galla slaves are a sort of low-class Abyssinian in appearance; he further declares that they 'fetch low prices, being considered roguish and treacherous.'

I have no knowledge of the Abyssinian physique, but the few Gallas I had on board were of a much higher type than the more southern negroes, and moreover, according to all appearances, the Arab slave merchant set especial store by them.[1] They certainly held themselves many degrees above their fellow captives—would not eat with them, formed a little clique of their own, and kept altogether aloof from the rest. There was one young girl, tall, slight, and by comparison not ill-formed or favoured, who wore some shreds of a spangled veil about her head. She was quite a lady negress, and in our fancy, drew her wretched skirts together as she swept disdainfully past those M'nyamuezzi M'yau's or M'Nyassa's who were not of her set. If it was amusing to watch her airs and graces, it was somewhat pitiful too, as it brought us all down to her level in these weaknesses.

Perhaps that which most forcibly strikes the naval officer in receiving his first rescued cargo, is the extraordinarily small space they occupy. In a boat about

[1] The group of Gallas in the plate taken from a photograph by Captain Sulivan, R.N., which he kindly allowed me to use, fairly represents the truth.

twenty-eight feet long by six wide, already containing eighteen full-grown Englishmen, I have seen transported through something of a sea, no less than fifty-eight rescued slaves. When washing decks, or when it was otherwise necessary to remove them from their usual position in 'amidships,' it was our custom to put our whole cargo of nearly 200 slaves in the boat which we carried on deck—a twenty-five foot pinnace—and they were content to remain there, and did remain there for hours, without apparent inconvenience. When left perfectly to themselves, they invariably aggregated, and crouched or lay together in comparative stillness for the greater part of the day.

To spend weeks sitting, crouching, or lying on the sunny deck of a man-of-war, without employment for mind or body, would be horribly irksome to Western races. I should say they are the happiest hours the negro ever passes in his unhappy life. He has space enough, food enough, warmth enough and leisure enough, and he has a never-ceasing and apparently most interesting employment for his waking hours. A sort of game flourishes in the coverts of his clothing, and he pursues it with all the ardour of a sportsman. The spectacle of a hundred souls or more, men, women and children, all pursuing this sport, either in their own or their neighbours' coverts, for many successive hours is a thing to see, even if the sight affects a European stomach in a particular way.

Burton mentions that the colour of the Swahili or Coast tribes of Zanzibar is brown, and not black. I may note the same thing of these Central African slaves

whom I have seen. The appearance and texture of their skins is quite different from that of the jetty Nubians whom one sees in Egypt. The colour is brown, and the skin, instead of being moist and glossy like that of the typical negro, is dry and scaly. The skin of the elephant, viewed through a diminishing glass, would closely resemble in colour and texture that of the Central African as I have seen him. A great deal is always made of what Burton calls the 'Racial effluvium.' I sometimes think it is exaggerated. No doubt there is much of unpleasant odour from a body of negroes; but so there is from any body of Europeans who are not over cleanly, and whose skins by successive generations of treatment have not assumed that softness, refinement and beauty of texture we admire so much when we see it in the complexion. I am by no means prepared to assert that the effluvium from a body of negro slaves is more sickening than that from a body of the lower class of labourers in Europe. My impression is, that the European effluvium is the worse of the two. But on the other hand I do not know the negro effluvium in excess and in a closed space; and I do know and have sickened over the other in these conditions. There are people in the world to whom the smell of musk is sickening, and to most people the neighbourhood of a civet cat is odious. The odour of the negro may be something like musk in character—it is as unique and peculiar as musk, and does not unalterably and exclusively associate itself with want of cleanliness, as does the effluvium from Europeans when collected in a body. In open air, as on the decks of a

ship of war, one or two hundred rescued slaves do not ereate anything like an overpowering stench, though, on the other hand, the wind blowing across such a ship would convey to any nose a hundred yards off the knowledge of the negroes' presence on board. This is the state of things when proper precautions are taken in the matter of cleanliness.

It may seem a difficult task to establish in a day on board ship, amongst a body of two or three hundred negroes, such sanitary regulations as shall keep them fairly sweet and healthy; but it is not so difficult as it seems. The British blue-jacket is eminently practical, and he looks at these things with a clear view of what is to be done, and the means at his disposal for doing it. His first care, therefore, is to provide an ample supply of sanitary conveniences; his next—generally by the use of such punishment as I have shown to be effective—to make the use of these appliances thoroughly understood by the sheep he is dealing with; he then observes and shudders at the sporting processes I have described, and he recollects that the ship is provided with some very excellent fire-engines of considerable power. The aggregation of the slaves in one spot renders them an easy mark for him who directs the nozzle of the hose—there is plenty of water alongside—and dirt is subdued as a conflagration.

It would probably be difficult, if not impossible, to explain the nature of the intended operation to the subjects of it; and, consequently, the first outburst of the waterspout produces results as nearly akin to sensation as seems possible to the negro community. For

once there is an outcry, and a stampede; but a cordon of amused blue-jackets surrounds the field of operations and the runaways are 'hushed' back into the vortex of the torrent. Gradually it dawns on the slow minds operated on, that it is washing, and not murder, which is intended, and then all, except a sullen few, submit themselves good-humouredly to the process. After a day or two they like it, and soon recognise the premonitory symptoms of washing time. Then you shall see the women—with some decency be it said—divesting themselves of the long sheet which forms their only dress, and appearing in one somewhat shorter as bathing costume. There is much chattering and some good humour when the hose begins to play, and many return again and again for an extra dose of it. Washing over, the bathing garment is dropped and the dress resumed. The time for this sanitary process is of course the morning when the decks are washed; and it is, with one exception, the only hour when the naval commander is forcibly reminded of the cargo carried by the noise it makes.

It is usual to give rescued slaves on board, two or three meals a day, according to the conveniences which may exist for cooking it. Our meals were two, at 7 A.M. and 4 P.M. It is the business of the captors, not of the Government, to provide food, and if the ship's provisions are used, the captors must pay for it. Though this might seem a regulation tinged with an over strict economy, it is not really so, for the cost of feeding slaves for the time they are on board is almost nil. In the vessel whence they are drawn there is usually

abundance of coarse rice or grain, which, when boiled, makes ample provision for them. The cooking appliances for the ship's company need not generally be encroached on. Cooking utensils of sufficient capacity are commonly found in the dhows, and a temporary fire-place on the upper deck, with a temporary cook to attend it, make all the necessary culinary arrangements. Such utensils as are discoverable in the dhow, form platters for the food; but if all fails, some pieces of matting are very efficient dishes for the dry cooked rice. At feeding time, the slaves are grouped—generally by the shoulders—in messes of eight or ten, round the platters containing the rice or boiled grain; the negroes dig it out with the natural spade formed by closing and extending the fingers; the rice or grain so dug, is rolled in the hands into a sort of gigantic bolus, and then bolted. It is not a delicate mode of feeding, and looking at it is not calculated to increase your appetite for dinner; but as an illustration of the proverb that fingers were made before forks, it is perhaps satisfactory.

Though the rescued East African slaves neither grin nor chatter to the extent which is proverbially natural to their West African brethren, they are good humoured when things go straight with them; and, like birds about to roost, they become more loquacious as evening draws on. Their talk is of their food, their immediate conditions, and immediate prospects. If the women are caught in the midst of a joke, ten to one it has reference to their prospect of husbands. A very standing joke amongst my female passengers, was the sudden

change which their prospects had undergone in this matter. Their talk was that whereas destiny had promised them Arab husbands, a still more powerful fate stepping in, devoted them to an English mate by-and-by. It was always a joke with them, never a serious matter. Yet amongst those so joking there must have been some—perhaps a majority—whose 'family life' had been rudely and ruthlessly broken in upon not many months since.

That 'the worm we tread on feels as great a pang as when a giant dies,' is the popular sentiment in England; and God forbid it should ever cease to be so. Yet the naturalist, bound to establish his facts, and to reason on them, tells us that the popular sentiment is wrong. He tells us that the higher the organisation, the keener is the pang; and he shows us the ravenous fish, torn and bloody from the hook where he has left his jaw, making for it again with increased eagerness, thus indicating that whatever pain he suffers, it is subordinate to his desire for food. Popular sentiment, in like manner, invests the uncultured negro with a tender heart; and though one may say here also: 'God forbid that popular sentiment should change, for when it changes England will change too,' yet, he who undertakes to write the truth cannot omit to point out that, by all the tests capable of application to the uncultured negro, popular sentiment is wrong. If the wind is tempered to the shorn lamb, most certainly is the sentiment of family life dulled to those exposed to be shorn of the wherewithal for its exercise. It may be asked of me, why, when I on the one hand uphold the value of

the popular sentiment, do I endeavour on the other hand to destroy it? My answer is, I am not the least afraid of destroying it wherever it is useful, that is, in those who do not need to call the sentiment into direct action in dealing with the negro; but I should very much like to see it destroyed in other cases, because I do not believe that any action taken towards the negro, which is based on a false estimate of what he is, is good for that negro; and, on the other hand, I am confident that action based on a true estimate—even though it involves some destruction of sentiment—will develope the negro into something better than he is when uncultured.

The reader will probably say that the fact—though it is a strong fact—brought forward, has not been sufficient to raise the discussion of a question so momentous. Accepting the rebuke, I pass on to remind the reader that a page or two back I said that only at one other time besides the hour already noted do rescued slaves make their presence felt by their noise.

This other occasion is in the evening, when they begin to sing. I believe I have as much patience as most men, yet I think the negro singing fairly beat me in open field.

There were some native negro drums or 'tom-toms' on board, taken out of slave dhows; and here it behoves me to inquire—what I never did think of inquiring after, until the publication of this book was settled—how did these negro drums get on board a slave dhow, and what were they used for? They are African drums, no doubt of that: familiar instruments to many on board; who

readily drive one frantic by their performance on them. One does not easily suppose that the Arab kidnappers solaced the weary hours of their northern voyage by 'stormy music' of their own production. Yet, if the Arabs did not use them, who did? The picture of a slave cargo of trodden-down, manacled, starved, beaten wretches, closing their miserable day at sea, in a slave dhow, by the ringing and eternal chorus to the drum accompaniment I know so well, is so absolutely incongruous that I reject it. Yet the drums came out of a slave dhow on her way to the Persian Gulf—there is no question of that.

These drums being discovered, it was only natural they should be offered for the acceptance of the negroes on board; and it soon became a custom that the slaves should give us a regular evening entertainment. I wish I could transport their music bodily into these pages, for, first, the surprise; secondly, the interesting; and thirdly the maddening of my readers. There are two or three songs, each consisting of a bar and some odd notes. I suppose the change of tone in the notes is about equal to the change of tone in the drum; and the air flows like a waterfall without its music, in a continuous iteration—'damnable iteration'—I cannot help saying with Falstaff. Besides the open and close sound of the tom-tom—a change indescribable, but known to every one who has visited the tropics—invariable hand-clapping keeps time, and gives point to the chorus. If the reader will take the trouble to recite the words 'yah-yah,' and to clap his hands twice afterwards, the whole four sounds forming a bar of

two-fourths time, he will have mastered the intricacies of an East African air. If he will continue to repeat 'yah-yah, crack-crack, yah-yah, crack-crack, &c.,' without pause or rest for one or more hours, he will know the meaning of East African dissipation; and if he will assemble a hundred or two of his friends, and get them all to do it in unison, he will understand what patience means should he find himself capable of listening for more than five minutes. I think we were sometimes very patient in the *Dryad*, for we let it go on for more than one evening when the chorus mustered some 150 voices, 300 hands and several drums.

I have now said a good deal as to the behaviour of the slaves on board; I should not like to leave them without saying a word as to the conduct of those who are in charge of them, the English blue-jackets.

I think I do not exaggerate when I say I might take the tenderest audience who ever wept over the wrongs of the negro given in the impassioned words of a platform orator, and might submit to them the rudest, roughest act which passes from the English man-of-war's man to his rescued prize, and that audience would say, 'How gentle!'

The blue-jacket is *very* tender and gentle to the negro slave newly liberated, there is no amount of inconvenience he does not cheerfully submit to in their behalf; and though, as I have said, the necessity of the case involves a sheeplike treatment of the negro flock, to the blue-jacket they are always pet sheep.

I do not expect to see a prettier sight than I was witness of for several days in succession when watch-

ing the conduct of the blue-jackets towards the negroes. Some of them who had been captured on shore after landing were sadly cut about the feet—especially the women and children—from running over the rocks. It was an established habit of the men—notably of the older petty officers—to carry them about in their arms, when it was necessary to move them from one part of the ship to another, so as to save them from putting their wounded feet to the deck. Then the doctoring which went on, the care with which cooling poultices were applied, and the careful bandaging, would have done credit to a village hospital; and that it was a spontaneous piece of charity made it all the more engaging to observe. I should say the poor creatures never had before, and certainly will never have again, such gentle treatment as they received at the hands of our English seamen.

I do not mean to say that the best looking—if there were any best—amongst the women, and the brightest amongst the children did not receive most attention. If I said such a thing I should libel humanity; but I do mean to say that each in his or her degree received, whether in the shape of help, of amateur doctoring, or tit bits from the better provided messes of the men, that kind of care which sprang from soft hearts kernelled in a rough exterior.

With so pleasant a picture of our countrymen, and my co-partners in the service of Her Majesty, I may safely conclude my light picture of 'slaves on board ship.'

CHAPTER XIV.

A CHANGE OF THOUGHT AND SCENE.

TRINCOMALEE is always a favourite resort of the navy in the Eastern seas. It is the one spot where we reign paramount, the single Indian port which is wholly naval. The harbour, one of the largest and most sheltered in the world, is also one of the prettiest; and revisiting its waters after long absence is, to the naval officer, very like coming home again.

My eyes had not rested on its harmonious colouring for twenty years; and as every shady creek teemed with recollections of bygone days, I could but look upon the place with strong affection. But to no soul in our ship was the utter change of scene which greeted us when we quietly steamed towards the little dockyard, unwelcome. It was four months since we had seen more foliage than a distant view of a date palm. So barren was the coast of Arabia, from Muscat to Aden, that the merest scrap of stunted verdure was sufficient to draw all our telescopes upon it, in some wonder as to how it got there. But now, at Trincomalee, our eyes were feasted with green. Every shore, every rocky islet, was crowned with rich foliage; and the still water became a gigantic mirror over which trees

hung in unceasing contemplation of their own beauties.

The leading feature of Trincomalee is its dockyard—a small strip of land fringing the harbour, and laid out in well built and beautifully kept store houses. Here it is that provision for all probable wants of Her Majesty's ships on the East India station is made. Unlike Bombay, where the dockyard is under the control of the Indian Government, and is supplied without reference to the necessities of the Royal Navy, Trincomalee draws its naval stores direct from England, and, within limits, our ships receive just what they would obtain in a home dockyard. The chief object of our visit was now to refit the ship, and to replenish the stores exhausted in our Northern slave-catching. A secondary object was to give us all that change of climate, thought, and scene, which our slightly knocked-up condition showed to be desirable.

There was at the date of which I write, and I suppose there still is, little actual rest for Her Majesty's ships on the East India station. There was seldom a time when we might lie on our oars, as it were, and wait for an occasion demanding our services. Our work, on the contrary, was always in advance of our efforts to overtake it; and long before service in one part of the Indian Ocean was over, there was generally a pressing necessity for our presence in another part.

It was remarked of the climate and the nature of service in the Indian Ocean, that while they could not be said to produce disease, they certainly wore humanity out, very much as they wore out ropes and sails.

The amount of 'general debility' apparent in our crews showed always how climate and service told. Few became ill with specific diseases; many seemed to wither like flowers on a wounded stem, and but for the facilities we had for sending patients home straightway, who were beginning to wither, I fancy the East Indies would now have the credit of being a very unhealthy station. Happily perhaps, the ships wore out as fast as the men, and the necessary replenishment of the one, afforded a very necessary change for the other, and gave us that rest which otherwise we should have missed. I may spend a few pages in describing the kind of change involved in naval life at Trincomalee.

I have said that the place is naval. It is military also, inasmuch as a small garrison of troops of the line, of the artillery, engineers, and of the Ceylon Rifles occupies and guards the old Dutch forts which command the approaches to the harbour. But the military are naval, when a ship arrives. It is for them, and for the rest of the very small community—all official—the great break in the monotonous and homely life which they lead. Hence, whenever the naval officer reaches Trincomalee, he finds himself in the middle of a circle of friends who are determined to think as he thinks, and to do as he does for the time. I suppose most military men or other officials who have been quartered at Trincomalee, have formed there naval friendships of some permanence. I doubt if I ever met a naval man who had visited the place without carrying away some pleasant remembrance of the little domestic community.

Naval employments at Trincomalee, when a shooting expedition is not either in progress or preparation, are not very varied or striking; but if I have managed to carry the reader through any violent changes of feeling in the preceding chapters, he may understand how acceptable the very want of sensation may become to us.

There are little walks in the cool of the evening; little riding or boating parties; little 'tiffins' or dinners; and little chats by moonlight after the latter, which are kept in a smooth and cosy tone by little supplies of cigars, and brandy and soda-water.

Almost the best house in the place is the bungalow of the naval commander-in-chief. When he is at Trincomalee he, of course, occupies it; but in his absence it is usual for the senior naval officer present to enjoy its comforts. If two or three ships are together, their captains generally make a sort of joint-stock household; where the other officers of the ships may come and enjoy the coolness, space, and quiet which is denied them afloat. The design of the bungalow is strictly marine, as it represents the after part of a man-of-war with captain's cabin, ward room, cabins, and stern gallery complete. The latter, a breezy verandah, overlooks the harbour in one of its prettiest aspects. Here night after night, the affairs of the Navy, small and great, are discussed; and that utter ruin to which it has been tending ever since the Henrys founded it, is predicted as being near at hand.

A thermometer standing at from 90° to 95° at noon has no power to prevent either little races, little cricket

matches, or little croquet parties in the afternoons at Trincomalee. In fact, though the thermometric heat is excessive, it is less felt there than I have elsewhere known it to be; and it is one of the few places where the dwellers on land join with the naval officer in his contempt for the sun's rays.

An institution peculiar to Trincomalee becomes known by name to every cadet at his first entry into the service. 'Sober Island,' a jungle-covered rock of some extent, in the middle of the harbour, is the personal property of the ward-room and gun-room officers of the navy. Each new arrival is bound by tradition to clear and name a new path through the jungle; to open out a new view; or to erect a new pier or a new garden seat, on the island.

The ward-room bungalow on Sober Island is on a commanding height overlooking the harbour; the gun-room, in accordance with the strictest disciplinary tendencies, occupies a lower level. Both are wide-roofed open structures furnished with rough tables and chairs. Here it is that the naval officer enjoys himself to his heart's content—in those very simple pleasures which so curiously suit his trained intellect. He has air and quiet here; he takes with him from the ship his book or two, his cigar or two, and an axe or other implement for clearing the jungle. He provides himself with what he wants in the drinking way also from the ship, and directs the native attendant at the bungalow to provide him with the necessary food. In the bungalow he reads, writes, or dozes, till the heat of the sun be somewhat abated. Then he does his

duty by the island in the matter of clearing or building; lastly he bathes—that great delight so seldom obtained by the sailor in the tropics—and then he returns to the round of his duties on board with a satisfied mind and a clear conscience.

Sober Island! In the varied retrospect of naval memory there always is, for him who has the experience, a little green corner occupied by the thought of some pleasant quiet day—or it may be, some mild evening dissipation—passed amid its tangled brushwood.

But the shooting expeditions are, in naval fancy and predilection, the grand parts of Trincomalee life. I cannot but say that there was a vast amount of disappointment in them. Times were frequent when neither the elephant, the deer, the bear, the peacock, or even the pig, would come out and be shot; and such were hard to submit to. Sometimes it was different, and then the shooting party returned in great triumph.

In the *Dryad* we, of course, organised—with the assistance of kind friends on shore—many of these expeditions, which turned out either successful or the reverse. One in which I shared may merit a brief description.

The country surrounding Trincomalee, once teeming with population and possessing an advanced civilisation, is now a vast impenetrable jungle, the harbour of infinite varieties of game. In the days of the country's prosperity, immense works were constructed for retaining throughout the dry season the rain poured out in the wet season. These works, now known as 'tanks'

still exist, and though in ruin, are sufficient to maintain larger or smaller sheets of water up to dates near the close of the dry season.[1]

Where there is water for a part of the year, jungle will not grow; and the remains of these tanks are always marked, in the dry season, by grassy plains of considerable size generally surrounding a small lake or pond. Where the jungle skirts the plain, the game assembles morning and evening; and the sportsman, having learnt the ways of his enemy, disposes himself strategically to intercept him.

Towards one of these tanks known as Kandally, situated some 25 miles out of Trincomalee on the road to Colombo, I found myself being driven by a friend on a certain morning in July. We were three in party, and two more were some hours before us.

Very soon after leaving Trincomalee, we got into the regular jungle road, which is excellent for the first few miles, and it brought to my mind many an avenue I had driven up at home. It was at first very pretty, especially when a slight turn gave a long vista of arching trees: but, having seen one mile of it you have seen most roads in Ceylon. Once in five or six miles we met a hut or two with a few natives, most of whom were employed in keeping up the road, and who met us usually with fresh milk, and sometimes with a green cocoa nut.

Naturally, one expects in driving through an utterly

[1] It has been the excellent policy of the Ceylon Government to restore these works in places. I am told the outlay becomes remunerative by the immediate sale of land in the vicinity.

wild country stocked to profusion with animals rare elsewhere, to meet some of them. The expectants—in our case—had to content themselves with some squirrels, a few lizards, one or two butterflies and a small snake. Except for the snake, the larger size of the lizards, the different notes of the birds, the different look, build, and buzz of the insects, we might have been driving along a twenty-five mile avenue in England if there were such a thing. The road however soon ceased to maintain its avenue-like level, and I was able to envy my friend's implicit faith in his springs.

A five hours' drive under such circumstances brought us to the 'rest house' at Kandally, lively in temper, pleasant in demeanour, and strong in appetite. A rest house in Ceylon means a more or less respectable cattle shed, with a strong table, a few chairs, a clay or mortar floor, and a roof thatched with cocoa-nut leaves. Such structures are raised by Government at intervals of about fifteen miles all over Ceylon, and are the substitute for hotels. Travellers carry with them beds, food and drinkables, and each person pays to the native in charge one shilling per day for the shelter afforded. Without these rest houses travelling would be difficult, if not impossible. That at Kandally was of the ordinary type, close to the road, on the opposite side of which rose the ancient embankment of the tank, sixty feet high and covered with jungle, except on its inner slope, where it was faced with stone.

The forerunners of our party had been out with their guns before our arrival, but had seen nothing, and dinner became the question of the hour. Long before

it was over we had unpleasant warning of the presence of the tropical scourge, mosquitoes. Our slippered feet were wildly itching and stinging in every part not covered by the slippers; two pair of socks were suggested as a preservative and tried without avail. The chairs on which we sat were cane-bottomed, our trousers were thin and white, and—well! newspapers were in some request. We did not spend a pleasant night; so, somewhat blotchy and swelled, were ready long before daylight to sally forth after the game.

How we fared I need not detail. We saw peafowls, hares, apes, snipe, deer, boars, pelicans, ducks, cranes and herons; an assemblage of rarities which require a Ceylon tank or a zoological society to bring together. Some we shot and many we missed, and then reassembled, thoroughly and satisfactorily tired, at the rest house. Our first inquiries there had reference to the possibility of 'a tub,' for a ten or twelve mile walk with a temperature of 90° makes that more than a luxury. 'Well,' said our friend, 'there are two places; one in the river we crossed half a mile off, the other close behind us. But the stream there is muddy, and not so good as the other.'

Our countenances fell at this intelligence. What was our friend going to do himself? Oh, he was going behind the rest house. That, too, should be our bath room; so there was an immediate stripping, an arraying in towels, and then a march in Indian file through a path into the jungle down to the stream. But oh! clover, clover! there was a deep nook deliciously shaded by palms and other trees, where a gurgling

stream made eddies in a deep bend, and where the water flowed softly, clear, fresh and inviting. There was a general exclamation of 'Oh, by Jove, how jolly!' and in we all splashed like so many water-buffaloes.

Sitting coiled up in the shade, with the fresh cool water flowing all round us and up to our chins, we passed a vote of confidence in the stream, declaring it was the best part of the whole business. I may as well mention here that whenever we were at a loss for something to do afterwards, a proposal to sit in the river met with immediate support; and, at all times of the day or night when we were not after game, one or more of us might be found coiled up in a hollow of the stream in placid enjoyment. If the mosquitoes were extraordinarily vicious at night we sought refuge in the river: if any one wanted a quiet cigar, a quiet half-hour with a book or newspaper, he went and had it in the river; and while sitting there one could almost persuade oneself that the thermometer was below 90°. Our day passed in dozes, in abuse of the mosquitoes, and in *séjours* in the river. Then in the evening we went after our game again, and here it was that I met a bird of habits sufficiently trying to the temper to deserve record.

You are carefully stalking a deer we will say, and find yourself unexpectedly closer to him than you thought. Over an opening in some tall grass you just catch part of his head, and are about to settle for your careful rifle shot. Up rises between you and the deer a flapping bird. 'Pity to do it. Pity to do it,' says the bird, as distinctly as though it spoke the words.

You take your eye off your sights—to argue the point with him, inclined to assert that it is *not* a pity to do it; but your game has had his warning, and you miss him as he scampers away. I presume the bird is a species of plover; but the note is the most singular, and the most provoking, I ever heard.

One evening, after dinner, our native attendants came to ask if we would like to hunt elephants by moonlight. In the general disbelief as to their immediate vicinity, and the general languor consequent on heavy exercise, only I and one companion started. We crossed the embankment and debouched upon the plain in a very few minutes, and then we stole along towards the shore of the small lake. We had not nearly reached it when we descried in the dim light, something looking like an enormous boulder of rock. The boulder sauntered towards the water and revealed itself as a large rogue elephant. My companion and some of the natives marched directly down upon him, whilst I with another, ran round to a point in the open between him and the nearest part of the jungle. There we crouched in the grass ready to intercept the giant on his way home. We were too far to see clearly the tactics of my companion and his attendants, but very shortly we were aware of several rifle shots fired in quick succession—of a short note like that of a French horn, and of a vast mass of something dark coming down on us like an express train. At this period, just as I was settling for a quiet shot, my native guide made a dash at my shoulder, shook it, and ran for his life. So my shot was in a measure

spoilt, and if I hit the beast at all, I did not hurt him much, for he merely sounded another note, swerved a little, and passed me into the jungle. It was really a grand sight, and a fine sensation, to meet a monster of this kind with all the accessories of the open plain and the dim moonlight. Of course my impression is that there never was a larger or a wilder beast; but I doubt if my impression is worth much.

There seemed to be no sort of wild creature which was not round the water this night. Wild buffalo, deer and pigs were in vast herds, and we met another elephant before we got home, so that, though we made no bag, we were well repaid for our elephant-hunting by moonlight.

It was in such expeditions as these, varying the quieter amusements of Trincomalee, that we refitted our constitutions before taking up once more the thread of slave-trade interception. While we thus attended to recruiting the *personnel* of the ship, her material wants were not forgotten: so that, in due course, she was refitted, coaled, and provisioned, and early in August we started on a month's voyage to Madagascar. There, our business was, beside other matter in close connexion with the slave trade, to suppress that traffic in the Southern, as we had previously attempted to suppress it in the Northern waters of the Indian Ocean.

CHAPTER XV.

MADAGASÇAR AND ITS SLAVE TRADE.

WHEREVER there are capes there are gales and currents: and capes which terminate long reaches of land are always specially favoured in both entities. So it was that 'heaving to' at midnight one fine Sunday night in a supposed position eighteen miles east of Cape Amber, the north point of Madagascar, we found ourselves at daylight next morning, in a strongish breeze with a chopping sea, with no speck of land in any direction to gladden our sight. We could guess that we had been drifted away to the north-west by the current; but how much, remained to be seen. All we could do was to bring the ship to wind, and to steer as nearly south-east as it would permit.

The breeze rapidly dropped as noon approached—which we discovered later was its habit in these localities—but it left behind it short seas which rolled and broke like surf upon a beach, presenting an appearance such as none of us had ever seen before. Ultimately, in the afternoon, we found ourselves in a dead calm; and, as time was short, we had to fall back on our boilers once more. Their assistance brought us in sight of land at daylight next morning. Cape Sebastian was on our

left, and the Amber mountain blue and soft in the distance behind it. Soon the Minnow Islands—giant haycocks—showed themselves, and then we began to make out how the land lay. Our rendezvous was Marbacool Bay—a piece of water between the French settlement of Nossi Bé and the mainland; and we steered in for it hoping to anchor there before dark, which we were able to do.

The weather had been all day most delightful. The air felt bracing and cool, and was touched with a certain balminess and fragrance which reminded me of English haymaking. A few of us landed at a little village abreast of the ship 'to throw a stone' as the nautical expression has it—or to 'stretch our legs' in 'shoregoing' parlance, after our month's confinement. Wonderfully like schoolboys let out for a holiday we all felt, and the most staid were not above taking 'an over,' if any one a trifle less staid offered him a back. We found the natives of the village civil and obliging as well as good-humoured. The soil everywhere appeared to be formed of decomposed scoria and looked as though it were capable of producing anything. Portions of ground were bounded off with very beautifully constructed fences, and I noticed one enclosure containing carefully planted manioc. The natives (Sakalaves) were not very dark, their hair was only semi-woolly and was plaited in innumerable plaits, with a careful parting down the centre. There were a few of seemingly more African type, but much better looking than the pure negro. It was said these people did not

recognise the Hova Government, but of that I am not certain.

The land in our immediate vicinity resembled, in its general contour, the county of Kent. But it soon ran up towards the interior into very rugged and abrupt ranges of lofty hills. There seemed some want of fresh water at this season, and we only saw one small well carefully covered in with palm leaves. There were no cocoa-nut trees, and other fruit trees did not appear. The huts of the natives were small, raised a foot or two off the ground, very clean inside, and remarkably neatly built of palm leaves, and lined with matting.

The general aspect of the surrounding country reminded me forcibly of Madeira and the Cape de Verde Islands, not quite so luxuriant as the former, nor yet so bare as the latter. The forest was everywhere much cleared away—seemingly by fire. Indeed the chief agent of cultivation—or of destruction—appeared to be fire, for masses of flames and dense columns of smoke were rising from every hill and valley, and the smoky pillars in the sky had announced the land to us long before we could make it out from the deck.

There was pleasurable stir, and mild excitement on board when a balmy and soft morning broke upon the ship; for two boats were to be dispatched as an exploring expedition to examine the nooks and crannies of Passandava Bay and its vicinity, for traces of the ever-to-be-chased slaver; and the ship was not to meet them again for a fortnight. There was a mighty stowing away of miscellaneous articles in all the possible and impossible places in the two boats. The regulation stock

of arms, water and provisions formed a small matter, for these, as usual in Her Majesty's ships, were kept ready at five minutes' notice. So many casks of water, so many of salt pork, so many of biscuit, and the little keg of rum with a lock on it, formed the staple of Her Majesty's supply. But the British blue-jacket has a marvellous affection for small delicacies and nicknacks, and no sort of luxury procurable on board the ship is unrepresented in her boats when they leave on an expedition. The man-of-war's man is also great in bundles when on detached duty; and one chief charm of going away so—for it has a charm and a great one to the sailor—seems to be the active abnegation of uniform. Some unwritten or unspoken idea prevents his displaying himself in his full detached garb while in view of the ship; but within half an hour after she leaves his sight, he opens his bundles and comes out in a ragged serge 'jumper,' a pair of more ragged flannel or blanket trowsers, and a red night cap. The spirit of the Elizabethan discoverer is abroad in the hearts of officers and men on a boat expedition, and the more lawless and piratical they can feel, so much the greater, apparently, is their satisfaction. Hence they put on, if not the manners of pirates, at least their appearance.

The boats being at length duly manned, officered, armed and stored, were made fast astern, while the ship weighed, and towed them into Passandava Bay, where she left them to proceed in execution of certain orders, while she herself went after her own devices. In a fortnight's time they were to be in Port Dalrymple

to meet the ship on her return from a visit to the more southern parts of the coast of Madagascar.

Bin Moosa had been promising us great things in the way of intercepting the Madagascar slave trade. We naturally supposed also that his personal knowledge of the trade would aid us vastly in our pursuit. Our great difficulty, however, was the impossibility of driving a knowledge of the nature of a chart into his head. Constantly on our voyage from Ceylon we had tried to get him to indicate on the chart certain slave-trading positions which he named and described, but which we were unable to identify with any names on our charts. Every now and then Bin Moosa seemed to obtain a clue, and at such times he would come into my cabin and get me to spread out the chart of Madagascar and the Mozambique Channel before him. Then he would ask me to point out Mayotta, Johanna, Nossi Bé, and Mozambique. Then he would go over and over the paper with his wandering finger, and at last bring it to a stop—as likely to be in mid ocean or the interior of Africa as not—and say that was where 'Kismān' was.

This Kismān, he always stated to be on the coast of Madagascar, convenient for traffic with the mainland of Africa. It was, he said, a large place, with plenty of dhows always at anchor, and that its chief traffic was in slaves. In the utter hopelessness of getting him to show us the position on the chart, we set him to watch the land, and to try if, in the course of our passage along it, he could recognise the spot we sought. As we steamed across Passandava Bay, Bin Moosa was

straining his eyes in all directions for Kismān; and the fact of his being so employed coupled with the fact that we are now entirely committed to the trapping of the southern slaver in his own waters, gives us a convenient opportunity for passing in rapid review what should be known to the suppressor of the Madagascar slave trade.

If it were possible to provide men-of-war with the latest works on the countries they are about to visit, the labours of our officers would often be facilitated, and their stock of useful knowledge greatly increased. The best, or even the worst, works on Madagascar would, had we possessed them, have been well worn volumes long ere we sighted the island. But as it was, we had to be content with some meagre outlines in our official sailing directions. After our first visit I had the opportunity of correcting and enlarging my scanty stock of knowledge, by reading several books on Madagascar, but I have a general feeling that many first-rate books on the island remain to be written. The enterprising and literary traveller has, I cannot but think, a future as great as that of the island itself before him should he take up the subject.

Of the southern part of the island very little is known to the navy. French settlements formed there in past days were swept off by fever, and such a result no doubt, threw a cloud over those enterprises. Of late years the northern part of the island has become better known to us—that is, to the navy—from its connexion with the slave trade.

A great mountain chain appears to occupy the

centre of the island from north to south, dwindling down to undulating plains abutting on the sea-shore. The north-west shore, from Cape Amber to Cape St. Andrew abounds in splendid harbours; and the country is generally covered with magnificent timber trees, of which the ebony and sandal wood have formed, and would form again, a large export trade, were the policy of the ruling race less narrow than it is. The character of the vegetation and the climate on the north-west and east coasts, differ considerably. The vegetation is more tropical on the east coast, and the atmosphere more humid. In the months of September and October the air on the north-west coast was decidedly more bracing than on the east coast, though I cannot say there was a great difference in the thermometer, which ranged not higher than about 85° and not lower than about 70°. But while on the east coast we got no more than one or two degrees of dryness, we had eight or nine on the north-west coast.

On both sides however the landscape is like nothing else which I have seen in the tropics. There is a park-like, domestic character of scenery everywhere present, which it is most difficult to attribute to natural agents. These are however the only causes at work, for everywhere the cultivation is of the scantiest. Though there is abundance of forest, I saw no jungle in Northern Madagascar, nor do I gather that such a thing exists; but round the shores of the bays nearest to Cape St. Andrew there were growths which approached the ordinary tropical tangle.

The inhabitants of Northern Madagascar comprise

several indigenous races, whose characteristics are marked with sufficient distinctness to attract the most superficial observer. The numbers of the four chief races have been estimated as follows: Sakalaves, 1,200,000; Betsilios &c., 1,000,000; Betsimakraraks &c., 1,000,000 and Hovas, 750,000. Then there are an untold number of imported negroes, always called 'Mozambiques' in Madagascar.

Though the Hova race is the smallest in number, it rules the rest.[1] It does not mix with them, does not allow them political power, except in rare cases, and to a very limited extent. While the other races are black in colour, though not negro in physique, the Hovas are light brown—lighter than the Southern Indian, sometimes as light as the Portuguese. Their origin is a puzzle to the ethnologist, for they resemble none who live nearer to them than the Polynesians or perhaps the Malays.[2]

Their true character is a far greater puzzle than their racial classification. On the one hand, large numbers of them have shown endurance under persecution, and persistency of purpose in holding to the Christian religion, that justifies even the strong expressions of the Churchman, or the Independent Missionary.[3] On the other hand, the latter represents the Hova character to be 'revolting and depraved': concealing vices the most abandoned and offensive, under the cloak of out-

[1] Ellis ascribes this preponderance to the supply of English arms, and to the English military training given under Radama I.

[2] The text is only true in a general way. Ellis may be consulted for the details.

[3] See Ellis: 'The Martyr Church,' and Bishop Ryan's 'Mauritius.'

ward propriety, courtesy, and good feeling ; they perceive not the moral difference between truth and falsehood, and even encourage falsehood as a virtue to be cultivated for the attainment of certain ends ; they regard honesty as lightly as they reverence truth, and the graves of their dead must be guarded night and day from the robber who would exhume the bodies for the sake of the property buried with them.

On the third hand, no one can meet them without experiencing both curiosity and interest ; and the superficial contact with them commonly leaves a quaint and pleasing impression behind it.[1]

On the fourth hand, that confidential testimony which is given on the spot by European residents unofficially, and with no ulterior object, declares that there is not on the face of the earth a more cunning, deceitful, treacherous, or immoral race. We shall meet them under their outward and—if the testimony quoted be true—their best aspect, in the course of our future progress ; and we shall see the fair curtain partially lifted somewhat later, disclosing features which, if not as hideous as those of the veiled prophet, are sufficiently ugly.

That kind of education which consists in furnishing students with the tools of knowledge—reading, writing and arithmetic—has been widely spread amongst the Hova rulers by the Independent Missionaries, who, years ago began to plant Christianity in the island, and have

[1] I have heard a blue-jacket put it tersely, if roughly, that 'they are the best niggers out.'

maintained their hold there ever since with but one break.

If it is a triumph for Christianity to record, let it be set down that Madagascar is Christian by law. Christianity is the State religion of the Hovas, and is maintained — in all outward forms at least — by the power of the civil government. If you ask a Hova governor to let you buy an egg or some fruit for a sick man on a Sunday, he will refuse you on the plea that the Queen's orders are against such a thing being done.

The Salique law is rather reversed in Hova politics, a queen being seemingly preferred to a king; and the present supreme governor, Queen Ranavalo Manjaka, wields the sceptre with a power which the peculiar arrangements of the government greatly enhance. She is married to her Prime Minister, who is in reality a despotic sultan acting under the cloak of the Queen's authority. For the good of the State, or in furtherance of his own ambitious views, he put away his own wife to marry royalty. I gather that the power of this Prime Minister is absolute, and that a life is of very small account which stands in his way.[1] The governors of all the important posts are creatures of his own, and many, if not most of them, bear the significant title of his 'Aides-de-camp' (Dekany).

I am not at all aware whether the Hova power is extending or diminishing over the subject races, but I think there is no doubt that it is imperfectly established even over the northern part of the island. Our ex-

[1] The statements in the text must be accepted *cum grano*. They are derived from various sources, but a flying visitant's information may err.

perience led us to believe, that at the outports of the north-west coast, there was no Hova authority, and no obedience to Hova law where there was not a Hova garrison.[1] Hence I gather that the government is carried on by cultivating the sentiment of fear in the subject races. I am not sure whence I have derived the impression, but I believe the same sentiment to be the motive power of most of the Hova acts.

The Hova or Malagassy language, reduced to fixity by the Missionaries, and always written in English characters, is one of the most beautiful I have ever heard spoken. As written, every word ends in a vowel, and though when spoken, the vowel is not always pronounced, its presence communicates a certain soft and harmonious flow to the language which places it, to the ear, even before Italian. It cannot be a difficult language to master, for a Missionary has been known to perform a Church of England service in Malagassy after six weeks' study, and to preach in that tongue six weeks later. I noticed this peculiarity about it, that it has assimilated and is assimilating French words to denote everyday things not indigenous in the country. English words do not apparently incorporate readily with the language; and this is the more noticeable in the case of French words because of the fear and dislike everywhere expressed by the Hovas to the French nation.[2]

[1] The Prime Minister excuses the reported import of slaves at Bassandava Bay, on the ground that 'there was, as it were, no military station in that part of the country.' See Parl. Pap. class B. 1869, p. 38.

[2] These remarks do not apply to some official terms. Though a fork is a 'fourchette' in Malagassy, the Premier is 'Prime Minister' and the Commandant of a place its 'Governor.' So also the terms of military command are English and not French.

The French have acquired two islands, one on the north-west and one on the east coast of Madagascar, and the Hovas are in eternal dread of an extension of French influence on the mainland. Their present friendly relations with us must, I think, be somewhat politically upheld as bulwarks against possible French domination.[1]

Tamatave, a port on the east coast opposite to Mauritius and Reunion (Bourbon), is the chief channel of Madagascar trade with Europe; and the largest export trade is in bullocks. Mauritius and Reunion, in point of fact, subsist on Madagascar supplies; and the fact gave rise to an idea long prevalent, if even now extinct, in the Hova mind, namely, that the outer world depended for its beef on Madagascar, and that Europe would collapse when Tamatave ceased to export.[2]

At Tamatave resides our Consul, the single official representative of England in Madagascar; there also fly the Consular flags of France and America.

Whatever be the moral character of the Hova race, there can be no doubt about their unbounded indolence;

[1] The success of the Abyssinian expedition had an extraordinary effect in increasing the Hova respect for England. The Government had, thus far, hugged itself on its inland security, and the dense forest which must be passed to reach the capital. The Hova intelligence was keen enough to assure itself that the power which had made short work of Magdala might make infinitely shorter work of Antanarivo.

[2] Milk is generally unobtainable in the coast towns of Madagascar. Cows are never seen there, though bullocks of a very fine breed are always to be found in plenty. The explanation given to me was the jealousy of the Government lest other nations should carry off a cow and bull and so rear cattle out of Madagascar. In the interior the breed is supposed to be safe.

and I suspect it is this which keeps alive not only an extensive system of hereditary slavery, but the import slave trade. Certain it is, that though very little in the way of work seems to be done or doing in the centres of population in Madagascar, there is always a vast superabundance of negroes ready to do it; and there is reason to believe that the importation of slaves from Africa is as brisk as ever it was. I am disposed to doubt whether there is any more accurate regulator of the slaving season than the presence or absence of Her Majesty's cruisers; for we know of cargoes being landed in February and in September on the north-western coast.

I find it stated before the Parliamentary Committee of 1871 that slaves to Madagascar are shipped from the Zanzibar ports as far north as Kilwa. In the navy we believe this to be a complete error. There are many reasons why we should so believe. The distance from Kilwa to the nearest point of Madagascar is over 500 miles, whereas the nearest point of Madagascar—Cape St. Andrew—is but 200 miles from the mainland. Both wind and current are usually foul from Kilwa to Cape Amber, and a dhow would find some difficulty in fighting against both. It is known however, that the dhow traffic, whether legal or illegal, crosses from Africa so as to make the land about Cape St. Andrew. In doing this the Arab traders are only following their usual custom of being out of sight of land for as short a time as possible. They would therefore quit the African shore somewhere about Mozambique, and it is only natural to suppose the slave car-

goes would be collected in the vicinity; it is strong confirmation of this view that 'Mozambique' should be the Hova term for an African slave. Mozambique itself, being Portuguese, does not export any slaves, but the Portuguese authority between Mozambique and Cape Delgado grows fine by degrees. Armed dhows collect the Portuguese revenue along the coast, and these have instructions for the suppression of the trade in slaves. But however good the will may be, and whatever the good faith of such instructions may be, it is no more than reasonable to conclude that slave-traders may avail themselves of the existing lack of power. South of Mozambique there is very little doubt indeed about the continuance of the slave trade; nor can it be supposed that its ultimate issue is elsewhere than Madagascar and the Comoro Islands.[1]

The general course of the trade appears to be across from the mainland to Cape St. Andrew or to ports south of it, and then a coasting voyage northwards, disposing of the slaves as market offers. If circumstances militate against a sale in Madagascar, the trader takes his wares across to the Comoro Islands, where, at least in Johanna, Comoro, or Mohilla, there is usually a demand for the article. It was a tradition amongst the slave trappers in my time, that no illicit trading went on south of Cape St. Andrew, and I believe none of our ships ever explored the coast to ascertain the truth. Recently it has been reported that a very brisk trade goes on there. Information which

[1] See on these points Capt. De Kantzow in Parl. Paper, Class B for 1871, Mr. Sunley in *ibid.* for 1866, p. 19, 1867, p. 52.

our Consul credited, was given to him in 1871, that at a port named Maintyrano in 18° 9′ south latitude, as many as two thousand slaves were landed in 1869, and that the ordinary import was much larger.[1] Such information as this opens quite a new field of view to the naval officer; because it deals with localities of which he knows little; and tells him, whatever his preconceived ideas may have been, that a raging slave trade may have been all along in existence from points south of Mozambique to points south of Cape St. Andrew. It has long been supposed that the Hova authority did not extend in any force to these southern ports of the island; it has also been supposed—erroneously as it now seems—that slave-trading was chiefly confined to Hova ports. Maintyrano does not acknowledge the Hova sway, but it might still do a little commerce with the Hovas; and it is by no means improbable that the traffic in slaves to Madagascar for the supply of Hova wants, supposed to have been lessened by treaty with the Hova Government, may, in reality, have been merely pushed into a different route. Hova wants may be met by profuse supply while they write in plaintive tones to us about the extraordinary care taken by them to uphold the terms of the treaty for slave-trade suppression. My own enquiries did not show me any increase in the price of slaves on the north-west coast of Madagascar, in consequence of the increased stringency of the law against importation. I then attributed the fact to a different

[1] Parl. Paper, Class B, 1872, p. 6. Mr. Sunley was under the impression that little or no slave-trade took place in the Sakalave country, the S.W. coast of Madagascar.

cause. If the import takes place south of Cape St. Andrew, out of acknowledged Hova territory, all my difficulties are explained away.

The first of these difficulties, supposing as I did, a decreased importation, was, of course, the absence of rise in price; the second, the enormous numbers of African negroes everywhere seen; the third, the undoubted presence of new importations; and the fourth the reported preparation for export on the mainland of Africa. None of these things exist as difficulties, supposing new ports of import; and we have before us the spectacle of a portion of coast carefully guarded by Her Majesty's cruisers during a portion of the year—stated by those interested, to be still more carefully guarded by the Hovas at all times—yet full of cheap slaves who are merely brought into the country another way.

Of the numbers of slaves imported into Madagascar and the Comoro Islands, our information is even more at fault than it is in reference to Arabia and Persia. Between September and March 1869 nearly 400 slaves intended for the Madagascar market were rescued on the north-west coast of that island. Consul Pakenham in 1868 claimed from the Hovas and manumitted seventeen slaves forming part of a cargo of 200 landed on the north-east coast. At the same time he received trustworthy information that in August and September 1867 two cargoes amounting in the aggregate to 500 slaves were landed and sold at Passandava Bay on the north-west coast.[1]

[1] See Parl. Paper, Class B. 1869, p. 30 et seq.

At Johanna alone, 130 slaves were landed in 1864, and 200 in 1865;[1] and there is no reason to doubt the continuance of the traffic, though our source of knowledge was cut off when Mr. Sunley ceased to be Consul.

Lastly, we have the statement that more than 2,000 annually land at one port south of Cape St. Andrew.

Remembering that the watch kept on the Madagascar trade by Her Majesty's cruisers has been as nothing compared with that kept on the Northern trade, I do not think we can fix the annual import into Madagascar of slaves from the mainland at less than many thousands a year.

I should doubt if the condition of the negro slave in Madagascar is so good as that of his countryman in Zanzibar. I cannot, on any basis, credit the Hova with that gentle indolence with which I have elsewhere credited the Arab. Whatever else he may show himself, I should judge him to be a cruel as well as a careless master to his slave. Only once amongst all my opportunities in the harbours bordering the Indian Ocean was I beset by demands for release from slavery, and this was at a Hova port. The Hova certainly looks down on the Sakalave and cares little what becomes of him—how much lower in the scale of humanity he rates the negro, I cannot say; but I should be surprised to see the latter in any case the trusted dependent of the Hova.[2]

The naval powers for suppressing the Madagascar

[1] Sunley in Parl. Paper, Class B. for 1866 and 1867.

[2] Ellis gives the Hova credit for fair treatment of his slaves, but he adduces evidence showing how utterly he despises the negro. Though free persons sometimes sell themselves into slavery: only rare instances occur where domestic slaves refuse freedom.

slave trade are the most ample we possess with any state.

As illustrative of the change which time has wrought, it is somewhat remarkable that the treaty with the Hova King Radama, entered into in 1817, related, so far as slave-trading was concerned, entirely to the stoppage of an export trade *from* Madagascar. There is not one word in it about the import trade with which we are alone concerned now. Moreover, the stipulation forbidding the export of slaves from Madagascar, which was bought from King Radama by an annual subsidy of various articles (including a pair of dress boots and a cocked hat) became in a later treaty a stipulation capable of being used to prevent the escape of imported African slaves to English men-of-war.

In 1823, however, power was obtained by treaty for English men-of-war 'to seize and detain all ships and other vessels, whether of and belonging to the subjects of Madagascar, or of any other nation or people whatever, which shall be found in any harbour, port, road-stead, creek or river, or on or near the shores and coasts of Madagascar, carrying on the traffic in slaves, or aiding and abetting in carrying on such traffic.' Vessels so captured might either be dealt with by a Hova commissioner duly appointed, or 'otherwise, as the laws of Great Britain shall authorise;' but if given up, they were to be forfeited for the benefit of King Radama.

Slaves so captured, were to be restored to their native countries if practicable; if not, they were to be given

to King Radama himself for enrolment in a body or corps belonging to his establishment.

A treaty of this kind could not of course be very effective. Both the vessels and the slaves remained in the hands of the Hovas, who were slaveholders and the promoters of the slave trade. If, however, captures were dealt with according to British law, and not given up to the Hova Government, there would always be furnished to the Hova authorities some ground for remonstrance and complaint.

It was not until 1865 that the present very comprehensive treaty was concluded with the Queen of Madagascar.[1] The slave-trading article is simple and strong. The Queen engages to do all in her power to suppress the trade in slaves. 'No persons from beyond sea shall be landed, purchased, or sold, as slaves in any port of Madagascar. And Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar consents that British cruisers shall have the right of searching any Malagash or Arab vessels suspected of being engaged in the slave trade, whether under sail or at anchor, in the waters of Madagascar. Her Majesty the Queen of Madagascar further consents that if any such vessels shall prove to be engaged in the slave trade, such vessels and their crews shall be dealt with by the cruisers of Her Britannic Majesty as if such persons and their vessels had been engaged in a piratical undertaking.'

So that, under this article all the territorial water questions and the nationality questions are abolished.

[1] The article directly applying to the slave trade will be found in Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 105.

The naval officer in Malagassy territorial waters has powers which correspond to those which he has in British waters. The Madagascar Government commissions him, so to speak, to destroy the slave trade within the waters over which it has jurisdiction, but not power, except through the help of the English navy.

But more than this—slaves must not even be *landed* from beyond sea in Madagascar. No Persian, Arabian, or Zanzibar treaty has gone as far as this, and it has resulted as a corollary, that slaves now landed accidentally or surreptitiously in Madagascar must be surrendered to the British Government. There cannot be a doubt that a treaty of this nature, however feeble in primary effect, must be an ultimate check to the slave trade in Madagascar. To reduce a trade to smuggling is a vast advance, and though time must pass and change must come before that branch of the inhuman trade which flows to Madagascar is stopped entirely, yet, by an increased guard along her shores, Madagascar may be forced to learn to exist without African slave labour.

While we have been thus engaged in taking a rapid survey of Madagascar, relative to its slave trade, we have crossed the mouth of Passandava Bay; and Bin Moosa exclaims that he recognises 'Kismān' in its western shore. A few dhows are seen along the beach under French colours; and as there is, besides the difficulty of search, the French settlement of Nossi Bé only a few miles off, we must not be discourteous. The French flag covers whatever may be going on beneath it, and we pass on.

But Moosa now told us that he understood the real customers for slaves landed in Passandava Bay, or at this Kismān, were the planters in the French colony itself. His statement was that nothing could be done openly; and that no cargo of slaves was ever landed in Nossi Bé; but that considerable numbers were smuggled over from Kismān to the island by twos and threes in canoes.

Knowing, as we do, the want of labour both in Mayotta and Nossi Bé, and the efforts made by means of the nominally free *engagé* system, now exploded, to fill the want, it is not improbable that such an arrangement is in force. I conceive it would be precisely the same, even if America or England held those colonies. Labour, being in demand, is supplied from the nearest point of Madagascar. Negroes once landed in Passandava Bay might just as well, or perhaps better, take service in the French colony; and it is impossible to conceive the labourer showing any inclination either way. Unless, therefore, the colony were absolutely and forcibly closed to all immigration, or every immigrant were submitted to an examination rigidly inquisitorial in its nature, Nossi Bé would probably obtain such labour as could be imported from Madagascar without attracting attention. Money payments must of course pass, in order to induce the supply, but it may be all done as it is now done at Zanzibar, by payment of wages to the negro, who hands over all above a certain sum to the master, or, to use a milder term, the agent, who has imported him. Even supposing a fee were paid directly by the estate owner, to the introducer of so

much labour, this could not amount to a sale of the man, in a colony where such sale would be illegal, and could not be sustained in a court of law.

The difficulty, which will appeal with much force to us as simple abolitionists, is, that so long as this demand for labour exists and is supplied, it means a continuance of the slave-hunting expeditions in the interior of Africa. It is most unhappily true: but, as will be hereafter seen, the consideration does not apply with equal force to my mind, as I believe none of the means we have yet taken as a nation, in the suppression of African slavery, have had a very material effect upon the interior slave trade of the continent. Any roundabout influence the French demand may have had, or now has, on the exertions of the slave trapper or merchant, in mid-Africa, is a mere item in many millions of similar influences.

CHAPTER XVI.

MAJUNGA.

Our orders now took us on to one of the chief towns on the north-west coast of Madagascar—Majunga or Mojanga—a place which lies on the northern shore just at the entrance of Bembatooka Bay. The cause of our intended visit had its rise in some transactions of the preceding spring which are important enough to be told in a little detail.

Her Majesty's ship *Nymphe* had spent some weeks in the months of February and March 1869 in a very active career of slave-trade suppression, on the north-west coast of Madagascar. The first days of March found her at Majunga exchanging the usual friendly visits with the Hova officers. Several dhows were lying at anchor off the town, but as there was nothing special about them, the officers of the *Nymphe* did not connect them in any way with the slave trade. On March 8 the commander of the *Nymphe* bade farewell to the Hova Governor and put to sea, but he had not got very far from the land when a canoe was seen approaching. The crew of the canoe on arrival on board asserted that two of the dhows then at anchor had landed a large cargo of slaves only a few days before.

Upon this information, the *Nymphe* returned the next day to Majunga. Her commander called upon the Hova Governor to deliver up the slaves landed in defiance of treaty stipulations, was distinctly refused, and then did what was in his power to do—destroyed the dhows from which the slaves had been carried.

On March 20, that is, when possibly sufficient time had elapsed for a messenger from Majunga to reach Tamatave, viâ Antanarivo the capital, with the news of the *Nymphe's* proceedings, the English Consul received from the Hova Secretary of State, a gentleman by name Rainimaharavo, a letter, stating that on the previous February 17, the Governor of Majunga had written to the Hova Prime Minister, 'reporting two Arab dhows with 194 Mozambiques.' 'When,' continued the Chief Secretary's communication, 'the Governor saw these dhows with Mozambiques, they appeared suspicious, as they were not making for the port, but steering west on the other side of the bay. He therefore sent officers in a boat to reconnoitre. These officers, seeing the number of Mozambiques in the dhows, seized the Arabs and the whole of the Mozambiques, and took them before the Governor of Majunga,' who caused them to be detained. This was the Hova official story, which concluded with a moral reflexion in these words:—

'You will understand from this that the care taken on both sides to observe the treaty, can only strengthen our friendly relations. What the Governor of Majunga has done shows the "excellence" of the orders issued

by the Prime Minister to our Governors, carefully to observe the treaty.'

The only little flaw in the case, rendering it difficult to accept the 'excellent' part of it, was the date of the receipt of the letter. Why should the Governor's magnanimous action have been kept secret for a whole month, and only disclosed after the fact of the landing of the slaves had become known to a British naval officer? The case was not altogether so clear as the Hovas could wish it, and being diplomats of a high order, they shortly afterwards proceeded to put the policy of 'abusing the plaintiff's attorney' into full force.

A few days after the receipt of the first letter by the British Consul, a second reached him, containing a full account, but perhaps not a very true one, of the *Nymphe's* visit, and the demand of her Captain for the slaves illegally landed. The letter contained, amongst such irrelevant matter as how the English officers joined cordially in a dance with 'the Malagassy officers and ladies,' accusations that the *Nymphe* had fired into the town, and that an armed party had landed and carried off Malagassy subjects. 'It grieves us very much,' tenderly observed this document, 'that after our Governor had observed the treaty and had seized the Mozambiques, our land should still be fired at with ball, without provocation,' and that the commander of the *Nymphe* 'was so enraged.'

Pending any enquiry into this matter, the Consul at Tamatave had succeeded in obtaining a promise that the slaves landed, would be given up to Great Britain, and

THE SLAVE TRADING PORT OF MAJUNGA.

it was finally arranged that the *Dryad* should bear to the Governor of Majunga, the Queen of Madagascar's order to deliver up the slaves to the commander of that ship. With such a letter in my possession, in all outward and inward appearance resembling an ordinary English despatch, and directed :—

Any Ramasy 14 Vtra Dekany
Prime Minister
Governor 'Ny Mojanga[1]

we came to an anchor off the place on a bright pleasant day in early September.

The town lies low down, close to the water, inhabited by Sakalaves, Arabs and Negroes. The Hovas inhabit the fort on the hill-top overlooking the town. From my sketch the reader may obtain a fair idea of the general appearance of both places, when viewed from the sea face.

So looked at, the town has a homely pleasant appearance, and the few two-storied stone buildings, in their architectural style, brought forcibly to my mind what I had seen in many an Irish country town. The surrounding aspect of the country was that of an undulating plain, well wooded in parts, the most prominent and most numerous tree being the mango.

It happened that we anchored on a Saturday evening, and, as we had been a long time upon sea fare, we looked forward—especially the sick amongst us—with

[1] 'To Ramasy; of fourteen honours: Aide-de-camp to the Prime Minister: Governor of Mojanga.' Rank amongst the Hovas goes by honours. I think sixteen is the highest. Rakotovao, Ramasy's son, was a six-honour man.

some interest to what our stewards might produce for breakfast in the way of fresh provisions after their usual foraging expedition to the town previous to that meal. It was perfectly unexpected, and I fear not very welcome, to find the unchanged monotony of a sea breakfast table before us, on the Sunday, and to learn as the cause, that the sale even of an egg was rigidly forbidden by the Government.

In the early forenoon, a deputation of Hova officers waited on us to express the Governor's gladness at our arrival, and as the Hovas themselves would put it—'to ask after the health of Queen Victoria.' The deputation consisted of two young men in white European dress, and those very neat straw hats which were new to us then, but which we afterwards recognised as the Hova head-dress on all but very state occasions. One of these was Rakotovao, the son of the Governor, whose portrait and autograph I have given in the plate. Both young men were comparatively light in complexion, and decidedly intelligent in manner; and, having so very much more of the air of civilisation about them than we expected, we straightway fell in love with them, and forgave them our unsatisfied longings after the flesh-pots of Majunga.

With them were four other Hovas of an agricultural aspect, very like Portuguese, in whom there was a faint touch of negro blood. Bin Moosa was away with the boats; but they brought off with them as interpreter a half-blooded Arab, who did duty equally well.

The first matter to be decided was 'How was Queen Victoria?' and the question came with just such anxious

Rakotovao 6 Vtn

personal interest as though they asked after the health of a sick friend from whom they knew we had that morning parted. Taking the hint, we then enquired, with equal anxiety, after the health of Queen Ranavalo Manjaka. Both sovereigns being happily in health, we were able to proceed to business, and our friend Rakotovao, producing pencil and paper, proceeded to write out the name of the ship and her Captain: the number of our guns and our men, &c., and just such particulars as would be asked for in any European port. There was a queer sort of playing at civilisation in all this which we noticed ever afterwards in our intercourse with the Hovas, and which at the first struck us as excessively and amusingly quaint.

The interview was closed by my informing the deputation that we proposed later in the day to visit the Governor, and they then took their departure in the single boat which the place boasted of.

In accordance with this expressed intention, we found ourselves later in the day, a party of four officers, pulling for the shore. Half-way there we were met by the same boat, carrying the same deputation as before, and coming to acquaint us with the Governor's compliments, that it was Sunday, and to suggest that I should put off my visit. Time pressed on us however, and there might be delay in the surrender of the slaves, so that after some little talk with the deputation, we decided to go on. Then we learnt that the message was a kind of official politeness on the Governor's part to remind us of Sunday, thinking that perhaps we had forgotten it, but that he was quite prepared to receive us.

Messengers were forthwith despatched up the broad rough road leading to the Hova fort (shown on the left of the picture), where the Governor Ramasy resided, and we were turned over—pending we knew not what—to the care of the interpreter. He led us to that large stone house which appears in my sketch, up a ladder, and into a large room on the first floor. The apartment was not over clean, the floor was covered with pieces of matting; and the tables, of which there were several, groaned beneath loads of glass and crockery ware, untouched for months past, if one were to judge by the dust accumulated on them. The whitewashed walls were decorated with small looking-glasses disposed in contrast to varieties of saucers and plates. Two bedsteads appeared at different parts of the room with drawn curtains, and several beds were rolled up on the floor.

Our interpreter—who, by the way, carried about with him an air of rascality unaccounted for—now muttered something about a 'woman' and 'Cape of Good Hope' and then called aloud. The answer, 'I am coming,' in English, arose in a muffled sound from one of the curtained beds, and out of it there rolled a large, very dark, fine-looking woman, swathed, Indian fashion, in voluminous folds of light pink muslin. She had a shirt stud sticking through a button hole in her nostril, earrings of stupendous proportions in her ears, necklaces and bangles on her neck and wrists. Her eyes were bright and fresh, and her hair was frizzed out like a wig. She saluted us with 'good morning, gentlemen,' and retired behind a pillar. Her husband

turned up off the other bed, and shook hands with us He was a native of Kutch, owned a dhow now lying in the harbour under French colours,[1] which traded to Nossi Bé and the Comoro Islands. He was now ill from fever caught in his last trip. Our lady friend was born at the Cape, had been in the service of Mr. Sunley at Johanna for a year and a half, but had been many years at Majunga.

We now understood that we were waiting for the preparation of a procession that we might go to the Governor's in due state. Sounds outside and below seemed to warn us that these preparations were getting well forward, and soon we heard strains as of wheezy old clarionets, drowned and smothered rather than accompanied by drums large and small. The music presently halted under our windows, and there serenaded us. The tunes were the very ghosts and shades of all the tunes native and foreign that we had ever heard; and they were all mingled in such an odd way that one had no sooner recognised a bar of 'Auld Lang Syne,' than it merged into the 'Aurora Waltz,' and passed by an easy transition into the 'Devil's Tattoo'—sustained by the drums alone—then through a certain hornpipe measure to the 'Morning Hymn.' The charm of the music was its sketchiness: like one of Turner's maddest pictures, the notes fired off at random left your imagination free, and permitted you to admire according to your taste.

[1] A vast amount of denial is given to the charge of lax granting of French colours and papers to dhows. Here was the subject of a British-protected state living at Majunga, and only trading to Nossi Bé, to whom they had been granted.

Mingled with the buzz of the populace, and the quaint music of the band, there now reached our ears sounds as of the clanking of arms, and certain authoritative utterances such as 'rerangtagoben-orra-arsh!' 'Shaller-ar,' from which we inferred that the forces were mustering. We had now some coffee handed to us and were informed that 'the palanquins were ready.'

Descending to the narrow street we found a guard of some ten men drawn up, who presented arms on our appearance. The troops were in uniform: white trowsers and a European shirt with the tails loose, while a square-shaped hat, like a sailor's, covered with white calico completed the dress. Their arms were a flint-lock Tower musket at the right shoulder, and a spear in the left hand. It was not certified to us how both were to be managed, but doubtless there was a will and a way. The officer in command of this force may be seen any Sunday in any country church in England. He was simply the better class of farm labourer in his Sunday clothes, by no means omitting the fluffy black hat which is constructed in some unknown region especially for the farm labourer in England and the officer in command of a military force in Madagascar.

Our palanquins were ready for us, with four bearers a-piece. Each palanquin consisted of two light poles joined parallel to each other by two iron stays. A small piece of canvas, camp-stool fashion, formed the seat, and a suspended bar formed the foot-rest. I however, as the chief, was more highly favoured: my seat was a very rickety cane-bottomed chair—a seat

uncomfortable and precarious in proportion to its dignity.

The band we found to consist of three staid musicians and three steady-going drummers. They were robed in the white and flowing garment—the Lamba—peculiar to Madagascar, and wore the straw hat before mentioned. The instruments besides the drums were two well-patched clarionets and a cracked fiddle.

All being now in readiness, the guard filed off in single rank, headed by our friend in the fluffy hat, who, by the bye, also bore a scimitar of mighty proportions, which might well have been Robinson Crusoe's 'hanger,' and which he waved occasionally with much solemnity. The style of this weapon I afterwards noticed to be common among the officials, leading me to believe them the discarded sabres of some cavalry regiment when the boomerang type went out, and the straight blade came in. Next in order followed the band, also in single rank, and then we four, in our palanquins. The populace, black, brown, and yellow, surrounded us on all sides; the band struck up its ghostly medley, and we went merrily through the town.

At a point where two main streets crossed, we halted, the populace and our escort uncovered, and the band changed its measure to a queer but not unmusical funeral dirge. I looked up and saw waving over us the flag of Queen Ranavalo Manjaka, to whom we thus rendered homage. This ceremony over, we proceeded, but more slowly, up the face of the hill to the Fort. High, dry, coarse grass formed the groundwork of our immediate landscape, which was dotted with

massive mango-trees covered with fruit just forming, and a leafless eccentric vegetable production, not to call it a tree, like a gigantic badly-grown beet-root, plunged into the earth leaves foremost and roots up.

The outworks of the Fort, when we reached it, were found to consist of a rude stockade, surrounded by a narrow and deep ditch. On each side of the gate was a gun, and behind it a guard of five or six men, commanded by another fluffy hat and hanger, and in all respects similar to our own. The guards saluted us as we passed; and we went on through two or three gates, or narrow entrances, till we came to a pretty large square, where the bearers immediately set us down.

At the opposite side of the square, standing on a raised dais, and facing us, was a group of individuals in every variety of European dress. The central figure, who was at once pointed out to me as the Governor, wore a black frock-coat, white corduroy trousers, a crimson velvet cap with a gold band, brown slippers down at heel, and a white shirt. His costume was completed by the tallest black stock I ever saw; and in his hand he bore a mightier scimitar than they all, more crooked and more unwieldy.

On our right and left, down each side of the square, were two 'bodies of troops,' of a dozen each, in single rank, dressed similarly to those which formed our escort, but with variations. Each was as usual commanded by a farm labourer in a fluffy black hat, and the troops were armed as ours were, but the spears were stuck upright in the ground before them, for the greater

convenience of handling the muskets. The Governor's party also took kindly to the pattern hat; but it contended here with a rival in the shape of a stiff cap with some gold lace.

We hesitated some few moments at our side of the square, not knowing what the etiquette of the proceeding might be, and while we did so, our guard and band formed in line behind us, facing the Governor and his party.

At this juncture the Governor got involved in some difficulties with his scimitar, and, it appearing clear that he was not coming to us, we advanced towards him, expecting, I confess, a corresponding movement on his part. But this was not to be. The Governor's head was fixed in his stock, and he would not so much as glance at us until some rigorous and unbending ceremony, with the ordering of which he was evidently pregnant, had been successfully got through. My thought at the moment flashed into epigrammatic form, and whispered, 'As natural manner is to petrified etiquette, so is civilisation to barbarism.'

We had no sooner reached the Governor's side—standing there in amused expectation—than he straightway delivered himself of that which weighed so heavily on his spirits. Turning his head stiffly to the interpreter, he muttered something which was translated to me as: 'Salute Queen Madagascar!' Then, performing a mysterious evolution with his sword, he uttered the occult words I had before heard under our windows. 'Rerangtagoben—orra—Arsh!' Nothing following this, we wondered and waited for the next order, which

came, as before, in the form of 'Shaller-ar!' on which the troops made a varied movement with their muskets. The next order, with a slash of the scimitar, was 'Atherite!' and then 'Hashewer!' Again 'Atherite!' at which several soldiers gave a little kick behind. 'Pace!' jerked out the Governor, when all the troops turned their backs to us, facing towards the gate. 'Resent! Ar!' when the troops really made a movement somewhat resembling our 'Present!' and the band struck up the melancholy measure we had heard on passing the flag. We all took our hats off until the band had finished, and the Governor then got his troops back again into their old position, and told us the next salute was 'for Queen Victoria.' He then gave the same orders, which to our astonishment resulted in our all turning in the opposite direction, while the band struck up the most singular fantasia on 'God save the Queen' which it has ever been my lot to hear. Our gracious Queen having been thus duly honoured, we were next told there would be a salute for the 'Prime Minister,' but this ceremony was dispensed with, and I was told 'now salute Captain.' I, however, was not an official of sufficient rank to engage the personal services of the Governor in the salute. That duty devolved upon the gentleman in the fluffiest hat present; but I could notice that the Governor was not quite easy in his mind about it. He seemed to me to mutter: 'I know he will make a mess of it—he certainly will forget the "rerang."' The officer did not forget, however: he went through his work like a man, to the visible relief of the Governor, who, as soon as it was over, seemed like

one released from thraldom. Looking over his stock with comparative ease, he seized me by the hand, and carried us into a large rough room, where, on a long table covered with a white table-cloth, stood a bottle of French liqueur, a carafe of water, and several tumblers. We all sat down round the table, and our palaver began.

I said I was very glad to see the Governor looking so well, and was much pleased with the reception we had met with. I got for answer that the Queen and Prime Minister were in the enjoyment of good health and spirits; and that things in Madagascar were in general flourishing. From which I inferred that my opening remark was informal, and had kindly been put right for me by the interpreter.

Governor (as interpreted): 'How is Queen Victoria? I hope she is pretty well. How is everything in Europe? What is the news?'

I. 'Queen Victoria is very well. The Prime Minister is very well. Everybody in Europe generally is very well. There is no news, but everyone is always glad to hear good news of the Queen of Madagascar.'

I. (After interpreter has finished.) 'I am very sorry to disturb Governor on Sunday, but time presses.'

Governor. 'Very sorry too—yes. Hope you very well. Very much pleased to see English Captain—man-of-war—Englishman generally.'

I. 'May I send some quiet men on shore for a walk this afternoon?'

Governor. 'Oh yes! plenty come, no harm.'

I. 'Has the Governor heard from Consul Pakenham lately?'

Governor (surprised). 'No, not heard at all.'

I. 'Any slaves landed here lately?'

Governor. 'No; want to catch some very bad, none come here now.'

I. (Pulling the Queen's letter out of my pocket.) 'I have a letter from the Queen of Madagascar for Governor—here it is.'

The Governor took it and looked puzzled; eyed it sideways, endways, front and back, muttered the word 'Consul' as one near him pointed out the Consular stamps on the envelope; gazed with something of awe on the official seal, and on the whole seemed to make nothing of it. Then arose a gentleman on the other side in a blue coat and brass buttons, who had been for some time fiddling with a pocket corkscrew in the vicinity of the liqueur bottle, and came over to assist in solving the mystery. He showed himself used to letters, which the others evidently were not, although he had some doubts apparently whether tearing the royal arms on the stamp were not treason. We inferred that he was the secretary.

Amid a dead silence, the outer and inner envelopes were opened, and the letter—written on a sheet of foolscap—disclosed. The secretary did not appear quite at his ease in his deciphering—I thought, because he was an impostor and could not read—but I found it was for want of an enormous pair of brass spectacles with green side-shades, which made him look like a pantomime character. Once across his nose, these

spectacles revealed the whole mystery. He stooped down and whispered the contents of the first paragraph into the Governor's ear. The demeanour of the latter gentleman underwent an immediate change; he hurriedly gathered up the letter and stooped across me to whisper to the interpreter.

Interpreter. (In a low whisper.) 'Governor say, all right. No got 'em now. Too many people here for speak, get 'em by-and-by. Slave in too many house in town, get 'em all in one.'

After a pause, during which the secretary had been manœuvring with his corkscrew, the Governor signified that the bottle should be opened, and a little drain was poured into all our glasses; there was one gentleman on the Governor's right, who received Benjamin's allowance and seemed to take to it kindly. Then the Governor said we should drink Queen Victoria's health. I said, 'After the Queen of Madagascar.' So we toasted the Queen of Madagascar, those on the opposite side of the table turning their backs to my side, so that we might all face the same way as we had done outside. Then we drank Queen Victoria's health, facing the opposite way. Next we all drank my health, it being a *sine quâ non* now that I should drink my own health and clink my glass with that of the Governor and his chief officers. Then we all drank the Governor's health, clinking our glasses again in due form. Finally we had a great round of general complimenting, terminating with the understanding that we were all to dine with the Hovas next day at four o'clock.

The séance ended, the Governor shook hands and bid us good-bye, but did not come outside. The guards presented arms as before, the band played, our escort filed off, we followed in our palanquins, and again stopping and uncovering under the Queen's flag, we dismounted where we had got up, and returned on board.

Throughout the quaint and amusing scene we had just witnessed, and shared in, there was one thought which pressed on some of us heavily. What was all this imitation civilisation worth? Was there anything real to be done with a people so servilely copying the European? We had seen the Arab in what many would call his perverse attachment to his own thoughts, religion, and customs: he was a very different, and a much grander being than these children, with their ape-like imitations.

Strolls round about Majunga showed always a fine open country, seemingly capable of much, really called on for little. In parts there was great want of water, but in others there were numerous small lakes, out of, and into which, streams flowed of sufficient volume for the irrigation of large tracts. Almost everywhere the mango abounded, and we met one tree which shaded a circular area 100 feet in diameter. The tamarind was also plentiful, but chief amongst the trees at any distance from the sea, was the cachew-nut, part of the fruit of which refreshed the stroller with a pleasant acid flavour, while another part warned him, by the merest touch of his tongue, that it was deadly poison.

There was generally every appearance of immense

rainfall in its season, and in the lowlands, now dried up, there was sign of rice growing. Scanty beds of manioc were scattered here and there on the uplands, but these two included all that could be called cultivation.

At the appointed hour, on the day following our first introduction to Hova official life, as many officers as could be spared from the duties of the ship found themselves escorted, with the same formalities as before, to the Fort. There, the method of our reception was similar to that previously described. But the Governor had divested himself of his stock, and was altogether freer, mentally and bodily, for the change. We observed that our friend the secretary had exercised some thought in the matter of his attire. He wore the blue coat and brass buttons before adverted to, white corduroy trousers tucked into an enormous pair of Hessian boots. His sword hung by three belts, two gold and one black, and he presented altogether a somewhat impressive appearance.

The banqueting hall we found prepared, and the table laid. We had the same room as before, the same table, and the same company; but there were bottles of Médoc on the table, plates—two to each guest—turned upside down, with a 'glass-cloth' by way of napkin on every pair.

The company being seated, soup in a willow-pattern tureen and a flat vegetable dish, was placed on the table, but before attacking it, we drank our respective Queens' healths in liqueur. At the very beginning of the ceremony the poor secretary was seized with a

violent fit of blood-spitting, and was obliged to leave us. Our kind-hearted surgeon saw him that afternoon, and many times afterwards, and found him in an advanced stage of consumption.

The healths being drunk, we fell to at the soup, which was in character not unlike good mutton broth. I had mine on a flat plate, with a very flat tin spoon. This course was followed by two mighty dishes of well-cooked rice, curried fowls, chicken kabobs, roast beef; ducks and geese, beef olives; a kind of dry sweet sausage, with dry unsweetened pancakes; and lastly wild ducks in great abundance.

Sitting thus at dinner, we might have been, from the general appearance and manner of our hosts, in the company of a gathering of small farmers.

Rakotovao operated as carver, and, as we said, helped us as he loved us. We had much laughter over B——'s *bonne-bouche*, which, coming at the end of the feast, consisted of about half a goose.

Dinner over, we drank the Queens' healths combined, while the guards outside presented arms and the band played the Madagascar national air. Let me here remark of the music that it was never unpleasant to hear, and always had a quaint pathos in it that set one reflecting. The national air, especially, became a sort of 'keen' or lament, as if it expressed a deeply-rooted fear that all this was spurious, and would die.

We soon adjourned to the dais outside, where we found the soldiers drawn up as usual; and sitting down in a long row we waited for the dancing, which, we were informed, would take place for our edification.

Some of the lady dancers were, on our right, dressed in old silks and muslins, cast-off ball dresses of a bygone period. These women, assisted by Hova youths dressed in an equally imitative costume, but always with the tails of their shirts loose, danced imitation European dances in the soft deep sand which formed the floor. There was here, in the character of the dances, that curious dreamy mixture of what was and what was not: that intimate intermingling of the original with something quite different, which we had noticed in the music. It was not ungraceful, and, though imitative, was odd.

On our left at this time was a group of some forty women sitting on the sand, each dressed in the long white sheets which seemed as universal as the male white Lamba. Half of these now arose, to exhibit a native dance to us. They formed in line in the middle of the square, each standing close behind the other, with their left sides towards us. Standing there, robed in almost classical garments, they became curiously tinged with resemblance to a chorus of vestals in a burlesque of the opera of 'Norma.' Indeed, there grew round the whole thing much of the air of the minor theatrical entertainment. There were the soldiers as male chorus, the women in the centre as female chorus; the sham chorus of women on the left, and all the available force of the 'company' represented by the populace behind. It only wanted some red fire to make it perfect; and as I looked at one officer, in a stiff green tail-coat certainly fifty years old, with a collar six inches high, an immensely tall white hat, and

sky-blue trousers, I could have sworn he was a stage carpenter at the Adelphi gorgeously arrayed in the odds and ends of the theatrical wardrobe; and that by-and-by he would be found behind that stockaded house, with canvas trees and a practicable door, which formed the background of the picture, in a paper cap and fustian, with a two-foot rule in his pocket, whistling over his preparations for the next piece.

The band now struck up a native air, whereof the rhythm was 'tum, tiddy, tum-tum; tum, tiddy tum, tum,' and the tune non-existent. The line of women in front became immediately a huge night-mare in the shape of a white centipede with a black back-bone (the heads of the performers), white legs, (their arms), and black claws (their hands). All the legs became animated and waved in time to the music. The centipede turned its head towards us, and came on with a stealthy, steady, and slow writhe. 'Tum tiddy tum tum, tum tiddy tum tum.' Music faster: the great beast comes crawling on, but its black-tipped legs jerk in faster time. Music faster still—beast crawling nearer—legs working spasmodically. Music furious—legs furious—beast crawling on. The catastrophe we look for in our dreams must result!—but no. The music runs smoother, slower: the great centipede breaks up, tumbles to pieces in the sand, and I wake from my nightmare to the clapping of hands of our party, and then the laughter of chorus and populace thereat.

The entertainment was now over. We parted from

our hosts with political and personal amenities, and returned on board the ship.

Of course it was necessary to give a return entertainment to the Hovas, which we did, but were somewhat surprised to find our guests arriving in uniforms only to be found at the French Imperial Court. There was but one thing which put us at our ease in dealing socially with these distinguished foreigners, and this was finding that the officer third in rank to the Governor was proudly conscious of the superior magnificence of his attire. He wore the cast-off coat of a colour-sergeant of the Royal Marines. The Governor, in the dress of an ambassador, sat on my right; his second in command on my left, in a scarlet frock-coat and epaulettes. In some way we had attributed to him reforming tendencies, and he was known by us as 'Young Madagascar.' He could employ two English words. One was 'missionary,' and the other was 'bible.' And he repeated these to me so frequently, that I gathered the question was, could I give him an English bible, and would I get a missionary for 'Majunga'? The one I complied with, the other want remains unfulfilled.

Somewhat incongruously, during the whole of dinner time, our boats were in chase, up the bay, of a dhow supposed by us to be transporting slaves out of the town—the very slaves we were there to release. We had sent an unarmed boat to board her on observing her leave the anchorage, and merely as a matter of form. The unarmed boat had, however, been refused permission to search, or even to board the vessel; and it became my duty to capture her at all hazards, as an

inforcement of our treaty rights. While, therefore, we were expressing every good wish to the Governor and his officers, I was receiving and conveying to him reports as to how the chase was going on, and how our boats had at last driven the vessel on shore, had re-launched her, and were towing her to the ship empty.

To all this—though evidently as uneasy as he could be, and I thought wishing himself safe on shore—the Governor had through the interpreter only one reply to make:

'Fool: Sakalava all fool!'[1]

The dhow, he stated, was proceeding by his orders with some Sakalave troops to a port higher up the bay; he disavowed altogether any slave-carrying arrangement. Yet the conduct of the crew of the dhow in running her ashore rather than allow our boats to board her, was suspicious almost to certainty. Proof such as would have condemned the vessel in a fair prize court was, however, wanting, and we had to content ourselves with the 'foolishness' of the Sakalaves in explanation. It was desirable, however, to mark in some way the breach of the treaty which had been committed in evading our right of search, so next morning we had the reputed captain and owner of the dhow on board to do homage, in the presence of the Hova officers, for her return. The homage determined on was that he should crawl to the feet of the boat's crew first sent, and kiss them all round.

[1] Ellis says the Sakalaves are the more intelligent of the two races.

I think there was some difficulty in keeping countenances sufficiently solemn while the imposing ceremony was in progress.

At Majunga we met a phenomenon we had never noticed elsewhere, nor, I may add, did we afterwards do so. There was almost a universal cry from the Mozambique population for release from slavery. It was seldom possible to pass a group of negroes without some individuals furtively making known their wishes by signs. It was common, when our boats touched the shore, or waited there, for a rush to be made to them by unfortunates who were usually intercepted midway and driven back to their owners. In some cases they managed to reach the boats, and it was somewhat against our grain to send them away. But treaties and usage must be respected by the British officer irrespective of his feelings in the matter, and we had therefore to make some sort of rule whereby we might not refuse the protection we considered it a bounden duty to afford, and yet avoid doing anything which might give the Hovas an opportunity of complaint.

We considered that Her Majesty's ships and boats were equivalent to British territory, and that any negro slave finding his way to the ship or to the boats, provided the boats were not actually touching the shore, had a claim to our protection, and should not be sent back to his chains.

I have not quite gathered how the law really stands in these cases, but naval officers have often to be their own lawyers, and we thought that at any rate our law

would be sufficient for the Hovas. We were aware—a copy of the latest treaty having by chance come into our hands—that there was the legal and illegal slavery in Madagascar, which I have described before; and that, however the case stood as to our duty in protecting or surrendering the legal slave, the Hovas could not themselves lawfully demand the return of a slave who had entered Madagascar since the signature of the treaty: but we had no efficient means of determining the legal from the illegal slave. The ground was not clear for us, as it had been on the coast of Arabia, and it became necessary either to decline to protect any slave who claimed our help, or to protect all alike. In the one case we should probably often foster the trade it was our business to stop, by sending virtually stolen goods back to the thief. In the other we only did what England has all along been doing when she could,—freeing the slave at all hazards.

It was under such circumstances that four pure Africans and one negroid found their way on board, and claimed our protection in the only way in their power, namely, by either swimming off to the boats, or seizing canoes—which they afterwards sent adrift—and paddling off to the ship. The circumstance was immediately known to the Hovas, who sent a deputation to me to demand the return of the Mozambiques under the provision of the new treaty which stipulated that the 'subjects' of the Malagassy Government should not be received on board British ships without a passport.

My reply was that no slave was a subject, and that they were not prepared to deny that my refugees were

Mozambique slaves. However, as I should consider them freed by touching our decks, they should see them all. I had a design in this, which will appear later—but in any case I was anxious that all should be fair and above-board in the matter. Each refugee was therefore paraded before the Hovas, who questioned them sufficiently closely to arrive at the truth about them, and this being done, they again, with a great deal of very excellent diplomacy, pressed on me that to take these men away was a breach of treaty.

We were clear about not giving them up, whatever happened; but, in order to avoid all controversy, I promised they should not leave the ship till the case had been submitted to the English consul at Tamatave. From the Governor I afterwards got just the sort of reply I should have had from any friendly diplomat: 'Perhaps I was in the right, but as the circumstance must be reported to the Government at Antanarivo, he begged of me a written statement of the case.' This of course I gave him, and the matter was so far amicably settled.

In course of time the Governor duly delivered to us the slaves ordered by the Queen to be given up. They were now reduced to 140 in number, and it was not prudent at the time to inquire too closely into what had become of the rest. It was quite sufficient to remove from the soil of Madagascar the largest body of slaves yet given up under the treaty, for the mere fact destroyed the market, and lowered the price of the slave.

There being after this no object in our remaining at

Majunga, we quitted the place after spending a week there, and proceeded along the coast to Port Dalrymple. There we met our boats, which had had many a fruitless chase, and had been despatched by false intelligence on at least one of the wild-goose kind, but had seen no vessel so suspicious as to justify detention. This being so, our boats were quickly got on board, and we sailed away for Mauritius, where we were to land our slaves.

We had an opportunity while at Majunga of attending a native Christian service, and as many readers will be interested in the mere fact of such a service being held, I may give a very short note of it. Unless the incongruity of apparently fervent religious aspirations and diplomatic cunning being combined in the chief performers—the members of the deputation to me about the five escaped slaves—connects the service with the slave trade, it may be objected that I should not introduce the subject here, but I am willing to override the objection.

The church was inside the Hova Fort, and consisted of a long narrow room, lined from floor to roof with clean white mats. We were met at the door by the Governor and his officers, who assigned us seats near it. The south part of the room was occupied by a raised platform, on which was a small table, and there at one end of it sat our friend 'Young Madagascar' with a large Malagassy bible before him. At the other end sat Rakotovao with another large bible. The chair in the centre was left vacant.

The congregation completely filled the little edifice, and numbers were looking through the windows from

outside. The women greatly preponderated, all of them crouching together on the floor in a position never altered during service. Their short wiry hair was neatly plaited either in the numerous tails common to the Sakalaves, or in the little flat bunches—making the head look like a tortoise's back—which seems to be the mode amongst the Hovas. Some of the younger girls were really pretty, and, rolled up in their clean white Lambas, formed by no means an unpleasant subject for contemplation. All our friends the officials were present, looking as like country farmers as usual, and many of them dressed in clothes presented by the *Dryad's* officers.

Singing was in progress on our entry, and we were all immediately struck by it. There was the same sketchy, fag end of a tune sort of character about the hymns which we had previously noticed about the secular music. Every now and then one seemed to recognise a few bars, and settled mentally what would follow, but that which was expected never came; the tune invariably merged into some quaint peculiar turn far from unpleasant, but utterly baulking any attempt to follow it. That which was most surprising was the contrapuntal style of the harmony. The four parts were quite distinct, and taken up with great precision; the whole forming a style of church music which, if it was odd, was also very far indeed from being out of character.

I could not discover any order in the service, but that may be my ignorance of the Independent worship. There was no change of posture; and singing, prayer,

reading of the bible, and short sermons or addresses followed one another indifferently as to order, except that singing alternated with every other form of worship. The reading or preaching took place always from the centre chair, occupied by several performers in succession. The addresses were delivered with great fluency, and it was possible to detect a repetition of sacred names greater, I think, than I have noticed elsewhere when I understood the language. If only one could have been persuaded that this technical reception of Christianity went deeper and regulated the life! But I fear no one was able to say that the life of a Hova officer at Majunga could have been very different when he was a pagan from what it seemed to us when he was a Christian, that is, not of a high type.

CHAPTER XVII.

A ROUNDABOUT VOYAGE TO ZANZIBAR.

MAURITIUS is by all naval officers allowed to be the pleasantest spot on the East India station, beating Trincomalee, first, because it is many degrees cooler; secondly, because it is many degrees more European. I should gladly linger over the very pleasant days we spent there after discharging our negroes into the hands of the Immigration officer, but time presses, and I can only speak of one or two points directly connected with that release of slaves which had brought us there.

Unlike the state of affairs at Aden in the previous June, it was cool enough at Mauritius for us to think of other things besides the heat, and I was consequently interested in seeing what became of our negroes after landing. So far as Government arrangements were concerned, nothing could be better. I saw the greater part of our cargo well accommodated in clean, airy rooms; the women were separated from the men, and all were dressed in clean cotton suits, which effected quite a transformation in their outward appearance. The arrangements for their feeding, and the goodness of the food, struck me at the time as excellent, and I can only say that no fault could be found with the status of the

rescued slave at Mauritius so long as Government was responsible for him; but this period was now, however, only a matter of days, for the whole of those negroes we had brought to the island were, within a week, taken up as apprentices by the sugar-planters.

Every student of these negro-slave questions must be struck with the contrariety of opinion as to the demand for negro labour at Mauritius and the Seychelles. Different witnesses almost accuse one another of garbling evidence on this point; and we are told on the one hand that the two colonies are anxious for any number of manumitted slaves we can send them; on the other, the statement is denounced as being made to suit certain views. It has appeared to me from what I learnt at Mauritius that the opponents have quarrelled about the colour of a chameleon.

At the time of our visit the island was in a state of busy prosperity. The fever, if not entirely gone, had abated so much as to be no longer feared as a scourge. The devastation committed by the last hurricane had been repaired, and its results, though heard of, were only seen in the ruin due to its wildest efforts. The sugar crop was magnificent, estimated at 125,000 tons against 70,000 the previous year. Revenue was rising, and, prudent or imprudent cutting down had lowered estimates. Every one shared in the general prosperity.

Mauritius is a small island, and it is also one vast sugar factory. Beyond the cultivation of the sugar cane and its conversion into an article of commerce, the colonist looks in vain for business; and if sugar fails

him, he fails with it. But to invest in sugar-planting is as speculative as to invest in mining. The adventurer may make a fortune in three years, or may be ruined in one. Let us imagine, if we can, a country whose commerce may rise or fall seventy per cent. in a year; and then, when we fail to imagine it, let us go to Mauritius and notice the fact, if we wish to avoid finding fault with any statement made respecting the labour market there.

The labour required in cultivating the cane is by no means heavy, and is in general supplied by Indian immigration. The Indian coolie is considered a cheaper article than the apprenticed negro, and the demand for the latter can therefore only arise when there is either a short supply of Indian labour, or an extra demand on the normal supply. There will come times when, from either cause, the value of the negro labourer rises sufficiently to induce the planter to wish for him; at such times we must expect those who feel the pressure, to say that it is always so. There will come other times when no planter can be induced to take the nominal charge of a black for a term of years; it will then also be forgotten that it was not always so.[1]

So that, though it is wrong to assume that there will always be an opportunity of washing our hands of the negro in Mauritius, it is equally wrong to suppose that we may not decently shake him off there sometimes.

[1] It has been my lot to hear the withdrawal of convict labour denounced —even from the pulpit—in Western Australia as a wrong: and to pass to Eastern Australia and hear its continuance denounced—even from the pulpit—as a sin. All the future was forgotten in one case, and all the past in the other.

I have used two severe expressions in the preceding paragraph, yet I fear our custom justifies them. I never heard that after the freed negro is once apprenticed for a fixed term of years, we, who have governmentally intercepted him midway to a master who would look after him for life, ever took—governmentally—any further notice of him. 'Left to themselves,' says the Bishop of Mauritius, speaking of the liberated Africans and their descendants, 'they are generally very degraded, very ignorant, and sometimes very destitute.'[1]

Whatever control the planters may have over their African apprentices—and this would be an interesting subject of inquiry—I gather that there is no law giving any one control over him when his time is up. If it is his desire to go to the dogs his own way, it is England's desire that he should do so, rather than that she should infringe a principle of government totally inapplicable to him.

Leaving our liberated slaves to the kindly care of the Government as long as it was responsible for them, to the care of the planter afterwards, and finally to the wayward leading of their profound ignorance, so soon as the evil of freedom was thrust upon them, we made our way back again to Madagascar, and anchored at Tamatave, on the east coast of the island.

Our business originally was but to put in an appearance at Tamatave to show the Hovas there that England was still upon the seas, and prepared to

[1] 'Mauritius,' p. 21.

administer the discipline which the course of events had committed it into her charge to do. But in the case of the five fugitives from Majunga, we had a more special business with the Consul at Tamatave. He was the representative of English policy to the Hovas, and, should he decree the release of these men, the Hova Governors and the Malagassy generally would come to know that slave property was precarious and dangerous to hold. Should he, on the other hand, find reason to decline, as judge of the Vice-Admiralty Court, to pronounce sentence of freedom in the cases before him, there would be an opportunity of restoring the negroes to Majunga—as we proposed returning thither—and thus giving an instance of the justice of English law.

On a given day, therefore, the five men were brought before the Consul in the presence of the English and the Hova officers. Four of them stated through an interpreter that they had only been two months in Madagascar at the date of their escape. The fifth was born on the island. There was thus a difference, and the Hova officers perforce agreeing to the justice of the decree, the four were manumitted and sent back to Mauritius, and the fifth returned on board for conveyance to Majunga.

The point disclosed by the examination—which we had suspected, when the Hova deputation claimed the restoration of these men, and which we intended to use—was that these slaves were as illegally held in Madagascar as they would have been in England, and that pleasant Rakotovao, the fluent Christian preacher 'Young Madagascar,' the ceremonious 'Governor

Ramasy, A. D. C. of fourteen honours,' were all of them personally and officially interesting themselves in the retention of stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen, and thus directly encouraging the thief.

It was with the weapon which such a knowledge provided us, that we returned to Majunga, determined to give the smuggled property of the importers and owners of illegal slaves such a shake as would cause it to be quoted low in the market for months, if not for years to come.

On an appointed day we proceeded to the Fort with the now usual ceremonies, and renewed our acquaintance with the Hovas as though we were preparing no pitfalls. We had bought for the Governor, at Mauritius, some quinine, eau-de-Cologne, dress boots, and other matters, which were now given to him as a sort of recognition of his having been either the willing or unwilling instrument of freeing the 140 negroes we had carried away. Then I handed to him the Consul's letter describing the manumission of the four illegal slaves and the return of the legal one. But publicly I merely stated that the four had been manumitted.

In the middle of the politest interchange of commendations, I suddenly said I wished to speak to the Governor in private. The announcement gave rise to what the French call 'mouvement' in the assembled company, and it was some little time before the Governor was sufficiently collected to know what to say. Finally he led the way into a side room—filthily dirty, by the way—where, in the presence of the Governor,

his second in command, the interpreter, and the first lieutenant of the *Dryad* only, we fell to business.

'Did the Governor know why those four men had been released?'

'No, not at all.'

'They were released because they had not been two months in Madagascar.'

'Governor say,' observed the interpreter in reply, 'he know nothing about it—Hova officers know nothing about it.'

'Does not the Governor remember that his officers saw and spoke to every one of these men on board the *Dryad*, and that when he says he knows nothing of it, he says that which is not true?'

The Governor hung down his head. That was a bad piece of diplomacy on the officers' part, that seeing and speaking to the slaves. He had nothing to say.

The next point was to assert that the whole place swarmed with illegal slaves and that the Governor was aware of it. He strenuously denied the knowledge until I brought my weapon down again. How was I to believe him when he had only the moment before told me an untruth?

'Well,' said the Governor, 'it might be taken as possible that there were newly-imported Mozambiques in the town, but the matter was not before him officially, so to speak.'

'Was it not his duty, this being the case, to afford the illegally-held slaves an opportunity for escape?'

'Well: yes. It was the Queen's orders that no slaves were to be landed; if any were landed he did

not know, but of course they had no business in the country.'

'Then no obstacles would be put in their way to escape to our boats?'

This was not an easy nut to crack, but at last he confessed that, legally, no obstacle ought to lie in their way, and that the Hovas would not be justified in preventing the escape of any slave imported since 1865.

'If, then, on a certain morning our boats were to lie off the shore, the Hovas would not prevent such slaves from escaping to them if they could, provided always that we should carry away from the place no one of whom it could be proved that he was not an illegal slave?'

This was getting worse for the Governor and his second. They had a long and uneasy conversation, but at last the answer was that they would not prevent such escape.

'But illegally-held slaves could not know what the boats were near the shore for unless it were announced. The Governor must therefore at a given hour next morning send round the town, and proclaim liberty for the illegally-held slaves, who might thereupon be off to the boats before their masters could stop them.'

This was the worst of all, and there was a longer and more uneasy talk between the two officials; but at last the Governor brightened up and said—first, that he would proclaim at the appointed hour as I wished; next, that he would see that no slave was prevented from escaping; thirdly, that he would distinctly order

the delivery of every illegally-held slave to me; fourthly, that he would afterwards, if I wished it, go round the town with me and liberate every illegal slave in the place.

This was such a waterfall of concession that we were satisfied nothing would come of it in the shape of rescued negro slaves, but whatever happened, illegal slave property would be made more insecure than it was before. One stipulation we thought it proper to make, namely, that until the appointed hour, about eight o'clock the next morning, the subject of our interview should be kept a profound secret. No one knew of it except the two Hova officers, the two English officers, and the interpreter; if any breach of faith occurred it would lie at the door of the two Hova officers.

The result justified our expectations. At midnight, word was sent round the town from the Hova Fort that an arrangement would be made the next day for giving up all illegal slaves, and that those who possessed such had better make away with them.

The uproar and excitement in the town were described by Bin Moosa, whom we left to note proceedings, as prodigious at that hour. The whole place was alive, the ways were choked with bands of Mozambiques being driven into the country; and when the boats reached the appointed spots near the shore, there was hardly a black man left in the town. Not only so, but the whole beach was guarded by groups of Hova soldiers, ready to intercept and send back any Mozambiques who might yet be lingering near, in the hopes of escaping.

Of course, after this there was nothing to be done except to have a final interview with the Hovas, give them a general sketch of our view of their character, and warn them that their ill conduct should be made known to the English Government.

They were, I must say, most unpleasantly crest-fallen. If they were as country farmers before in appearance, they now looked as though the corn laws had just been abolished; and as for Ramasy of the fourteen honours!—he had told me all along that his head was in danger, and he seemed as though the order was out for its removal.

In spite of all, however, I am not sure that the friendly sentiment towards these odd people was destroyed in us, and I believe we quitted Majunga with the feeling that there was a fund of interest in the place and people hardly even drawn upon in our double visit.

At the particular time when we were on the coast of Madagascar, there was another man-of-war on the Mozambique coast of Africa. All our information led us to believe that as every year there came a time when no men-of-war were about these waters, the slave trader had acquired the habit of running his cargoes at that season. At any rate our time was so nearly out, and the prospect of doing any business so very small in the remaining time, that we determined to change the venue altogether, and thus, after quitting Majunga, we turned our head to the northward, and ran under steam and sail direct for Kwyhoo, the limit of the legal slave-trade from Zanzibar.

The coast from Kwyhoo to the Juba river is very

peculiar. A chain of islands and rocks, known as the Juba Islands, skirts the shore for 150 miles, at an average distance of five miles from it, and forms a succession of harbours and sheltered nooks, admirably calculated for the prosecution of an illicit export trade. Between the Juba river and Brava this chain of islands is absent, and the coast is one long unbroken beach.

Captain Sulivan, in H.M.S. *Daphne*, and Captain De Kantzow, in H.M.S. *Star*, had the previous year laid a violent and successful embargo on a slave trade between the south and Brava, running as late as November 10.

As we had reason to believe that there were no men-of-war at the points in question, and as we were in a position to reach them about the end of October, we thought we might possibly be acting for the best in making direct for the southernmost of the Juba Islands.

On October 30, we were off Kwyhoo, and there we detached two boats with directions to search the islands thoroughly, and to be ready to meet the ship at an appointed rendezvous in a week. The ship herself passed on to Brava.

The town is situated on the slope of the beach; the surrounding country is sandy, barren, and dried to a chip. The town was of the usual Arab character, and, as usual, ruinous. A single English merchant-adventurer resided here, trading to Zanzibar in skins, ivory, and feathers. Of course the place was in expectation of attack from the Somalis, and Mr. Hales, not being aware of our experiences, made a very strong effort to induce us to remain as a guard. We had not forgotten the

Persian Gulf, and were able to draw from him at length that there was no more than the chronic fear of attack in real existence. At Brava we met another man-of-war, which had passed up from Zanzibar along the coast without discovering any signs of a renewal of last year's traffic. This fact, coupled with other information, determined a short stay at Brava, and we soon made for the south, picked up our boats, and were off for Zanzibar.

Some important points may be noted relative to the regulation of the Brava trade with the south—whether legal or illegal—which is enforced by the winds and currents.

The current seems to run up as far as Brava all through November, if indeed it ever runs down to the southward there. But the winds, which up to the middle of November are from south to east, and more south than east, begin then to blow round from east to north. Thus, practically there is up traffic from Zanzibar to Brava from April till the middle of November, omitting the period between the middle of June and the middle of August, and there is only down traffic between the middle of November, and perhaps the middle of February. There is good reason to believe that the slave trade flows evenly with lawful commerce all through the up-traffic season.

CHAPTER XVIII.

ZANZIBAR.

DOWN the low coast of Pemba Island: five-and-forty miles by night with steam and sail. The land lying on our right black and heavy like a low wall, but broken here and there by dashes of surf on the cora reef which guards its whole boundary. But we are afraid neither of the shore nor the reef, for it is wall-like below as well as above the water-line, and we might almost rub our sides against it without fear. Daylight breaking showed that we were approaching the south end of the island, and proved the existence of a current of two miles per hour in our teeth all night. We steer for the north point of Zanzibar Island, keeping a little more to the right therein, and discuss the probabilities of our reaching Zanzibar anchorage before nightfall. We are sixty miles off at 8 A.M., and unless the current favours us more than it has hitherto done—we have been four days battling with it—there is little chance of our succeeding, except by an expenditure of coal not to be thought of, when our progress already costs twenty-five shillings an hour.

But we leave Pemba behind us soon, and its outline grows fainter more quickly than we anticipated. The

north end of Zanzibar Island, which we shall leave on our left, is but five-and-twenty miles from the south end of Pemba, and we see it plainly, long before we lose sight of the latter. We are to pass within half a mile of the coast of Zanzibar Island, leaving it on our left, all the way down to the town; on for twenty miles; and we look forward with some degree of pleasure to the views of the country which such proximity will reveal to us. Current and wind now both bestow their blessings, and we round the northern end of the island merrily.

The air, at first oppressive, and the sun's rays, at first unbearable, give place to a cooler and pleasanter meteorological state. The breeze blows off the rich undulating plains, and bears with it a balmy fragrance, now of many flowers and opening buds; now of fresh earth newly disturbed; now the autumn perfume of the falling leaf, and now, strong and overpowering, —essence of cloves. I have heard it doubted whether 'spicy gales'—always ridiculously associated in my mind with 'sharks and whales'—do really blow in spicy quarters of the globe, and I am glad to assert roundly, on the testimony of many noses taken two days ago, that they do.[1]

The shore was very bright and variegated. On the uplands grew the mathematically-exact rows of spice trees, broken here and there by wild jungle, groups of palms, or the dark green sponge-like mango. On the lowlands, especially at one point, were large plains of

[1] Burton speaks of the same thing in the same spot.

sugar-cane, green patches of grain or grass, and astounding forests of cocoa-nuts. The crisp rippling water-line met and kissed the 'shining sands'—really shining here—and above the beach rose low rocky cliffs, undermined in places, and always deliciously contrasting their reds, browns, and greys with their complementary greens. Soon, when afternoon came to us—and it was apparent we should easily reach our anchorage before dark—we passed increasing numbers of large white houses, flat as to roofs, and cube-like as to general appearance; they were provided with abundance of windows, and looked massive and solid. And then, broken into eccentric shapes by the atmospheric Puck, mirage, we began to see, miles ahead of the ship, a fairy city rising from the horizon. Tall ships lay in front of it; feathery palms sprang gigantic out of nothing, and heralded the approach of mighty banners, floating, changing, and disappearing, veritable wills-o'-the-wisp by daylight. Then came up arches, colonnades, terraces, and gardens—castles in the air, or architectural cherubs, which you will.

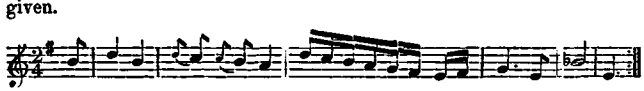
Ah, the change from telescopic fairyland to dull reality, optical and olfactory! I am writing in the Mission House, and the latter remark is forced from me by reason of the air through the open windows. Fairyland disappears as we near the anchorage: the gallant fleet diminishes to the sultan's dilapidated old frigates; the waving banners to the consular flags of England, France, America, and Germany—the latter much resembling a variegated blanket. The colonnades, arches, and terraces show as a group of buildings of a

somewhat better and larger type than we had hitherto met in Arab towns. The balmy air disappears, and unholy stenches take its place. It is Muscat or Bushire on a better plan, and in a more favourable locality, and is in point of fact—Zanzibar.

There are some moments which, notwithstanding they be passed within the tropics, are really pleasant. Some few such I passed on the morning after our arrival here. It was 9 A.M. There was breeze enough for me to feel it gently fanning past me, through the ports and skylights, but not enough to ruffle the burnished surface of the water, save here and there where it was dashed with a dark spot or line. Looking towards the horizon, the sea terminated in a clear bright edge, and the sky began with a dull grey, which presently broke into confused masses of cloud. Looking towards the shore, no more than a few hundred yards off, I saw a group of large flat-roofed houses, palaces a mile off, and pigsties on a nearer acquaintance. They are full of windows, and generally partly ruinous—for never was an Arab house in complete repair. Mingled indiscriminately with these white and yellow buildings, were patches of green gardens, and above them the cocoa-nut palm reared itself at intervals. On each side of this mass of houses, I saw stretching away, from green to purple, and from purple to violet grey, a low coast-line beached with glittering sand, and topped with palms, spice trees, and all the richnesses of tropical foliage. The sounds I heard were the monotonous chant of slow labouring black slaves, who on the shore are busy shipping, landing, or transhipping

the ivory, copal, mats, spices, cocoa-nuts, and rice which are by-and-by to be carried away by the fleets of dhows which travel down the African coast with the N.E. monsoon in December, and travel up again homeward, by the S.W. monsoon in May.[1] I heard besides, the confused murmur of our own men forward preparing for our Sunday's parade, and the measured tread of the officers pacing the deck, and chatting. Near the ship lay the fleet of His Highness the Sultan Syud Mājid, four ships in more or less ruin. Their blood-red ensigns, drooping dead and still, reminded us of the palmy days of the Arab power, when the fleets of Omān swept the seas, or later, when Syud Said, the father of the present sultan, fought side by side with the English; or later still, when he presented England with a new line-of-battle ship, and received in return a small frigate, which was then at anchor.

The stillness round me was the more noticeable and marked, from the cessation of the thump, thump, thump, of our screw, which had been continuous for many days until then. It was not cool; but it was not so hot as to make one feel over-done in the light dress which is indispensable in such a climate. On the whole, as I leaned out of my port and reflected on

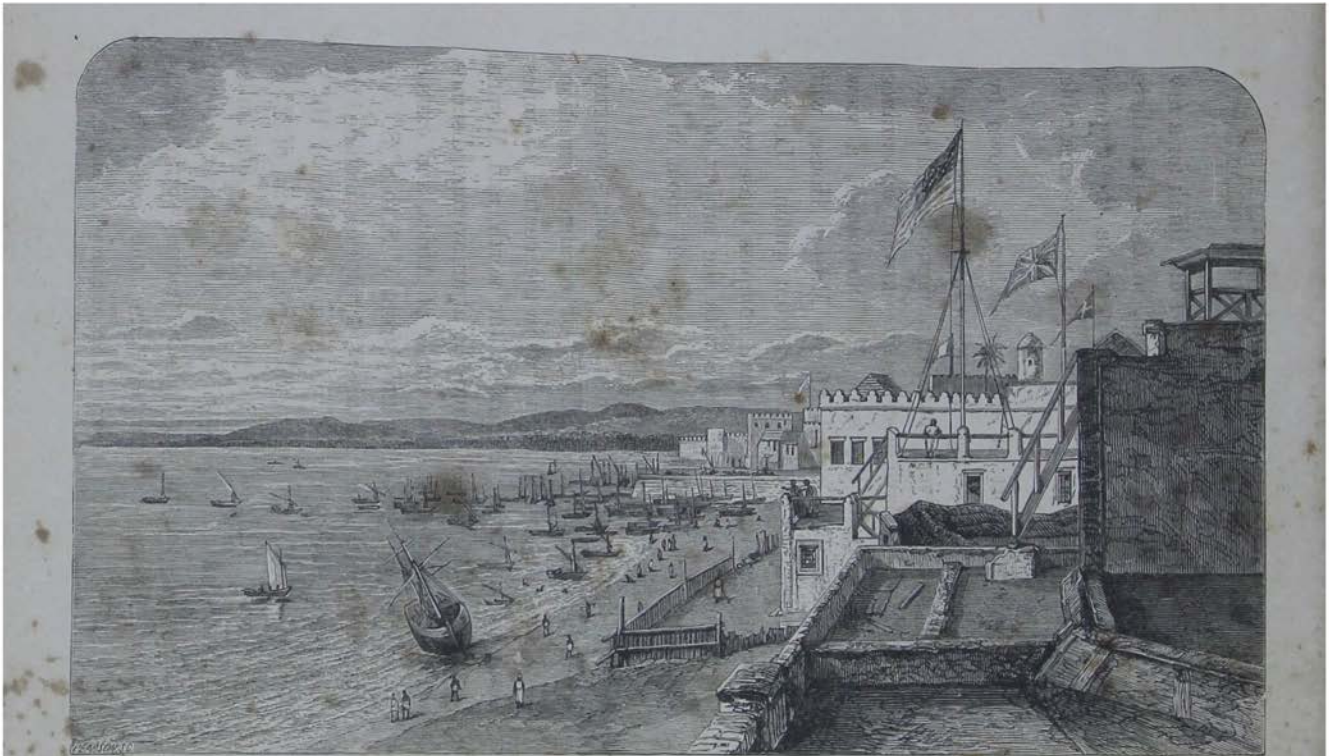
[1] One of these chants, which is in common use among Zanzibar labourers, and of a more elaborate kind than those used by negroes fresh from the interior, may be of sufficient interest to the musician to be given.

I have heard this repeated over and over again for several hours without pause.

these things visible and invisible, I did think for a few minutes—until the sun got up, in fact—that there were negative pleasurable moments in the tropics; possibly induced, as in electricity, by positive miserable ones.

Zanzibar, a port of the world hardly known by name a few years ago to the ordinary geographical student, is now a very centre of attraction to all classes in England. I have described its outward appearance when seen from the sea. My illustration, a view taken from the Central African Mission House, will fairly convey its general aspect from within. Let me now attempt to put into small compass those various facts which connect the place with the subject of my title, and which otherwise lie scattered about in too much confusion for the general reader's use.

The territories included in the Zanzibar sovereignty comprise three large islands of coraline formation, low and flat, namely, Zanzibar in the centre, 45 miles long by 15 broad; Pemba in the north, and Momfia in the south. These islands lie at an average distance of 20 miles from the mainland of Africa, and extend over three degrees of latitude, from 5° S. to 8° S. On the mainland, the Zanzibar territories include the coast-line from some undefined point south of 10° S. latitude and some undefined point north of 2° S. latitude.[1] That is to say, certainly over 500 miles. How far inland the sovereignty of Zanzibar extends cannot be determined. Arab trading stations exist many hundreds of miles from the coast, (as at

[1] The present Sultan is erecting a fort at Kismayo in lat. 0·22 S.



ZANZIBAR: FROM THE CENTRAL AFRICAN MISSION HOUSE.

Unyanyembe, 700 miles, and Ujiji, 900 miles, inland,) which render a greater or less obedience to the Sultan's wishes. But at any moment such stations are liable to be surrounded and cut off by the negro population, and marauding tribes will occasionally blockade on the inland side the chiefest ports of the Arabs.[1]

Over this undefined stretch of territory the government seems to be a kind of patriarchal republic. The sultan is no despot such as we understand a Turkish Governor to be: he is rather the father of a family whose sons are all of age, who therefore have opinions of their own, and who must be consulted on all family matters very nearly as equals. I have described in the chapter on Omān the nature of the law by which an Arab sultan succeeds to power. It corresponds to no other institution that I know of, and I do not think I err in believing that its semi-republican character tinges all the acts of government. In some undefined way, the sultan seems to feel that he is elected to office during good behaviour, and is more the servant of his people than their master.

The sultan's sovereignty has been described as feudal; but I hardly think any term with so definite a meaning can be applied to it. I should say that his power is more limited than that of any feudal sovereign, nor do I imagine that there is between the sultan and the noble that mutual interchange of service which constituted feudal relations. The Arab noble of

[1] Steere in 'Parl. Rep.' 1871, p. 71. Churchill in *ib.* Playfair in Parl. Pap., Class B, 1865, p. 122. Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 70.

Zanzibar, though he exercises more than a baron's power over his dependents, would be surprised to learn that he derived such power in any way from his sovereign—least of all, I suppose, would he consider the tenure of his land in any way connected with his allegiance.

The difficulty of putting pressure upon such a potentate is this: that if he personally consents to adopt a law or a custom which is in violent opposition to the will of his people, they will dethrone him, unless prevented by force. To our view it would be a lawless proceeding; but if I rightly apprehend what I have seen and heard, the dethronement of a chief would, under such circumstances, be in strict concert with Arab public opinion. Any Power such as England, venturing by threat to obtain concessions eminently distasteful to his people from the nominal ruler at Zanzibar, must be prepared to alter the status of government, and to keep him on his throne, no longer by the will of the people, but by force.

The population over which the Sultan of Zanzibar exercises a wayward sway, comprises first of all the Arab, no longer the independent, frank, and turbulent spirit I have sketched in the North, but a milder, quieter specimen, on whom long residence in the tropics, and perhaps a tropical ancestry on one side, has left a very distinct mark. Still I think it may be said of him that the more Arab he is, the better he is. His ordinary language is no longer Arabic, but Swahili, and the former becomes degraded to a mere Court dialect.[1]

[1] See Dr. Kirk, Parl. Paper, Class B, 1872, p. 34.

The natives of India, either British subjects or the subjects of States protected by the British, who reside permanently or temporarily at Zanzibar, form the next if not the most important feature in the population.

The bulk of natives of India at present in Zanzibar are subjects of the Rao or chief of the protected State of Kutch, but have been made by him the subjects of Great Britain so long as they reside in Zanzibar territory. Whatever the nationality of the Indians, the great majority are Mohammedans, those professing Hindooism numbering only 474.[1]

Of those who settle permanently—that is, who bring their wives and families with them—there are over 2,500, and the number has increased sixfold within the last thirty years. It is said that the failure of Indian cotton manufactures to compete in Hindostan with those of Manchester, is the chief cause of this increasing emigration to Zanzibar; but whatever the cause, the fact is most significant and must have, if it continues, an extraordinary bearing on our connection with the territory.

The whole Indian population of Zanzibar is 3,600, and it deserves notice that while some of these, being Hindoos, belong to castes which cannot permanently settle out of Hindostan, the recent increase of immigration there is amongst those who may bring with them their wives and families, and make the place their permanent home.[2]

[1] Parl. Paper, Class B, 1872, p. 18.

[2] I do not know whether this rate of increase is now maintained, or whether the labour question has checked it. See *apud*, p. 379.

The great mass of the population of Zanzibar are, however, negroes, either imported or native, either slaves or free. The negro slaves alone have been estimated at fifty to one as against the Arabs, and between these two extremes there is that infinite division of negroid which is seen wherever a black and a white race come together.

The black races are those in whom English interest at present centres, and I shall therefore devote a few pages to the consideration of their status.

There is in Zanzibar no distinction between 'slave' and 'servant,' the same word is used for both, and, 'Amongst the negro population there is practically no distinction whatever between free and slave labour. In appearance, mode of work, and living, and also in regard to pay, there is no difference, and even amongst the domestic servants of Europeans, it cannot be known, except by special enquiry, who are slaves and who are free.'[1] Possibly the bare conception of such a state of things is almost impossible to the English general reader; yet I have spoken to the same effect of the negro in Arabia and Persia, and personally noted it at Zanzibar as well. There can, I think, be no doubt of its truth.

Bearing it always in mind, the reader may be told how there are several classes into which the 'special enquiries' mentioned, may arrange the negro population. There are first the aborigines—free negroes, a race

[1] Dr. Christie in 'The East African Slave Trade:' Harrison 1871. A pamphlet to which I am much indebted in this chapter; and which everyone holding strong opinions on negro questions should read.

decreasing in numbers and importance. Secondly, negroes, freed by Arab or English acts of manumission, either born on Zanzibar territory or imported. No one knows the number of this class, nor has anyone yet been found capable of making a visible class of them, or of separating any of its members without much cross-questioning, from the actual slave class.

Thirdly there comes the great body of the people, the slaves,[1] and these are divided into two sub-classes, the Wazalia, or slaves born in Zanzibar, and those imported. The main class may take another subdivision of a different kind—the town slave differing from the country slave, whether born in the place or imported.

If anyone can be found who will define what constitutes a slave, he might afterwards have a difficulty in deciding whether or no the Zanzibar serf did or did not come under his definition. The process of sale or capture to which he or his ancestors were originally subjected, seems to be the only ordinary condition of slavery which applies to him, and to all other varieties of his class.

If we say the slave is bound to one master—from whom, however cruel he may be, he cannot escape—it is not so with the Zanzibar slave, for he can compel his master to sell him in such a case.

If we say the slave's time is absolutely at his master's disposal, this is not true of the Zanzibar country slave; only five days a week are his master's.

The slave can own no property? Well, the Zanzibar slave not only owns property but slaves;

[1] 'Roundly estimated at two-thirds of the population.'—Burton.

and a new importation may find himself bought in the market by the slave of a slave of an Arab.[1]

Are we to say a slave's bondage is hopeless? Then the ordinary Zanzibar slave has no wish or object in being free, and generally objects to that status. If, however, he desire freedom, much of his time is his own, and his money made in that time is also his own —freedom, if desired, can always be bought by the industrious slave. He generally, however, prefers a little property in slaves himself.[2]

Is the slave worked to death; according to Mr. Mill's positive dictum? The Zanzibar country slave works compulsorily but five days in the week, and seldom later than noon. Though the town slave works harder, he makes money of his over-time, and is on the whole better fed and better provided than the former.

The slave is liable to be re-sold against his will—families are liable to be separated forcibly in order that a profit may be realised? We are told that 'no Arab could traffic in his slaves, for to do such a thing would certainly lead to a general desertion.' 'To sell one of his purchased slaves, would be considered an indication of extreme poverty; but to sell one born on the estate or in the household, would be considered a disgrace. In the former case it would only occur

[1] 'When a slave can accumulate sufficient money, he almost invariably invests it in this way.'—'East African Slave Trade,' p. 47.

[2] Col. Pelly relates a difficulty he was in with negroes freed by British authority from British Indian masters, who paid over to the slave certain dollars as compensation. Away goes the freedman to the slave market and lays out his money in slaves of his own!

from sheer necessity, but in the latter it would in ordinary cases indicate utter ruin. Slaves of notoriously bad character are often sold; the object of the master being to get them off the estate and out of the island, and they are often exposed for sale in the public market simply as a mode of punishment when all other means have failed. To expose a slave thus for sale is the last degree of punishment.'[1]

Then, as to the separation of families, our authority tells us that, 'in the event of slaves on an estate being sold, owing to the poverty or bankruptcy of the owner, families are not parted except in the case of grown-up young people, and the same regulation holds good when, owing to the death of the owner, the slaves are divided amongst the heirs.'

So we might go on through all the various conditions popularly believed to be inseparable from negro slavery, and find one after another failing us in explaining the status of the slave in Zanzibar.

It may of course be thought that all these arrangements so wonderfully planned in mitigation of the evils of slavery, are regulations merely—legal dead letters—put up for show, not for use. All I have heard and seen convinces me to the contrary, and I do not want the direct testimony of my authority—which he gives—to assure me of the fact.[2]

There are one or two extraneous reasons why we

[1] 'East African Slave Trade,' p. 45.

[2] The tone of Burton's account little corresponds with the text. I can only say that Dr. Christie being much more precise than Burton, having a long residential experience, and saying much that my own enquiries confirm, is properly followed by me.

should believe most things that are told us relative to the goodness of the status of the Zanzibar slave, and should disbelieve most things that are told us relative to its badness. The first is the nature of the Arab character, which I have already attempted to sketch. Such a character could scarcely be persistently hard or cruel—even his indolence would stand in the way. If he bears a bad business reputation, he bears also an easy one, and a very little complaint from a dependent concerning the personal inconvenience of some pending business transaction would turn the Arab from his purpose.

Then again, when amongst the relations of the slave and his Arab master, such a matter is represented as being a law, the English mind must not allow itself to revert to the idea of a statute passed and put away safely out of sight in print. On the contrary, with the Arab, only that which is common custom is law; and, if we hear of a law enacting that a slave ill-treated by his master can compel the latter to expose him openly for sale, we know that the actual custom is frequent enough to make it legal.[1]

A third matter, and perhaps one as important as the two already mentioned, is the power every slave has of turning himself into money and escaping, at one and the same operation. When, every year during the months of May, August, and September, a dissatisfied slave can make his way down to a well-known quarter

[1] Burton says ('Zanzib.' vol i. p. 352) that no one buys adult domestic slaves, because, as I have noted, those sold are usually incorrigible. A slave causing himself to be sold would of course not come under this category.

of the town of Zanzibar, pocket some dollars, and have himself shipped for the Persian Gulf in half an hour, it is hardly possible to believe that a negro intelligent enough to rise against ill-treatment would omit to avail himself of the opportunity. Thus, there always is that sort of interested motive, dear to the political economist, calling upon the Arab master at Zanzibar to make and keep his slaves comfortable.

It may, I think, be said generally that the Arab when he buys a negro, does not buy the man at all, but only a defined portion of his labour, and that on conditions over and above the price paid down; and one cannot avoid reflecting that in such a case of very modified or tempered slavery, if the master were only progressive, the negro must rise with him to the highest status of which negro nature is capable. As it is—though my authority confirms my impression of the immense improvement effected in the negro at Zanzibar subsequent to his first importation[1]—he cannot and does not rise above the condition of his Arab master. But, if he has 'proved himself to be a person of intelligence and trust, he is generally freed, assumes the Arab dress, and associates with his master on the footing of an Arab of inferior family. He generally remains in the service of his former master, and is devotedly attached to his interests, the relationship between the two being almost identical with patron and client.'[2]

The owner of the country estate takes from his slave the labour of five days a week. In return he gives

[1] Dr. Kirk however denies it of the country slave.

[2] 'East African Slave Trade,' p. 35.

him as much land as he can cultivate. The owner of the town slave at least houses, feeds, and clothes him; but more generally he allows him besides, all that he can make by his labour over about fourpence a day.

In all cases, the Arab noble is the feudal chief of his dependents, and offers them the protection we understand by the term.

I have been unable to discover that the free negro at Zanzibar is in any respect better off than the slave. Looking at the hope of better things, which is always dangling before the eyes of the slave if he be intelligent enough to experience the power of hope, and the assured platform on which he originally stands, I cannot conceive a condition in the island more calculated to encourage him to advance towards freedom, as he is able to bear it.

Nor can I, on the other hand, imagine an act more likely to send a negro downwards, than to turn him loose a free man in Zanzibar. He is, to begin with, as he himself expresses it, 'a dog without a master;' and if we revert in thought for a moment to the contrast between a masterless pariah, skulking about in the darkest purlieus of the town, feeding on garbage and offal, and seldom enjoying a real meal unless it be a stolen one; and compare him with the sleek well-fed house dog, we may have some real conception of the Zanzibar liberated African. Were such a one possessed of extraordinary intelligence, he might, like his West African brother, be supposed capable of supporting himself in petty retail trade.[1] That avenue, I take it, is more or less closed to

[1] Parl. Rep., West Africa, 1865,

him at Zanzibar by the Indian and the half-caste, who already occupy the ground. I do not know whether it would be possible for the liberated African to squat at Zanzibar, as he has squatted in some of the West India Islands: I should imagine that such a thing would not be permitted by the slave population even if it were allowed by the Arab landowners.

Generally, my impression, derived from the various sources of personal observation, reading, and conversation with residents, is that the negro freed at random in Zanzibar has three choices before him. He may formally or informally re-enslave himself to a Southern proprietor: he may either voluntarily or involuntarily be shipped off to the Persian Gulf: or, he may remain in the town of Zanzibar as a not very reputable 'long-shore loafer.'

My authority is very clear in his assertion that the freed slave does either voluntarily part with his freedom, or assume all the outward conditions of slavery, in order to reap the benefits of that social status. We know as a certain fact that the Northern kidnapper asks no questions about the status of his stolen goods, and will carry off bond or free with impartial knavery.[1] I cannot suppose the ordinary negro would long resist the temptation of a few dollars to enslave himself for the Northern voyage, supposing the slave trader did not find it convevient at the moment to steal him. Finally, the casual visitor to Zanzibar is very early made acquainted with the free

[1] Burton says the Northern man-robber has been known to lay his claws even upon Arabs.

'loafing' negro, picking up a living no one knows how. If there do not appear to be so many of these, and if they are generally boys or youths, it would seem that the older ones have disposed of themselves, or been disposed of in some of the former ways.

Burton gives a picture of negro—especially of slave—morality in Zanzibar which is simply appalling. The casual visitor, accustomed to regard morality not from the high platform on which a thousand years of steady progress upwards has placed the Englishman, but from that lower stand-point which a general knowledge of the world's populations has compelled him to take up, will not be so struck as Burton appears to have been with Zanzibar ethics.

That the negro is a pilferer by nature, those who know him believe. I never understood that he was worse at Zanzibar than elsewhere.[1] No doubt the sanctity which surrounds the married state in England is totally wanting in Zanzibar.

Dr. Steere says:—'You may say morality' (of that kind) 'is unknown;'[2] but then he is speaking from the English stand-point, to an English audience. I should not take his words as a corroboration of Burton's picture of indiscriminate licence. On the contrary, Dr. Christie says: 'The slaves are encouraged to contract marriages and live in family, and in the event of their not finding wives on the estate it is customary to purchase those for them to whom they have formed an attachment. The marriages are regarded as binding, in the same sense as they are amongst the Arabs, but

[1] See, however, chap. xxii.

[2] Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 72.

they are not contracted before the kathi (kadi), the master of the estate or his deputy being in the place of, and having the same power as, the kathi. The offspring of these marriages are called "Wazalia," and they occupy a much higher position among the slave population than those who have been brought directly from the mainland.'

It must not, however, be concealed that early marriages are recommended at Zanzibar, as elsewhere, for the negro, by all who have had dealings with his moral training.

It seems to be agreed that the negro race at Zanzibar does not increase and multiply. Burton accounts for the fact—if it be one—as the result of moral turpitude. I should like to be well assured of the fact in the first instance, before tracing out its causes. One could well understand that the excess of births over deaths might be less than in more favoured localities and amongst finer races, but that would not be admitting a standing, or still less a decreasing, population. It does not follow at once that the few thousands of slaves annually imported are necessary to keep up the population to its normal figure; on the contrary, it is quite possible that the continually increasing commerce, and therefore continually increasing demand for labour, may absorb this immigration, and that there might still be a little increase in the standing population. On the other hand, residents at Zanzibar remark that the number of children in a negro family there is usually small.[1]

[1] Capt. Fraser in 'East African Slave Trade,' p. 17.

I understood of the Zanzibar Arab noble, as of his Northern brother, that he was a bad man of business, and, still like the Northern Arab, usually in the hands of an Indian agent who, though strictly honest, gradually absorbed his client's property. From all I heard, it seemed to me that there was a process of mortgage foreclosure going on which was slowly, but very surely, transferring the ownership of the land to natives of India, who were either British subjects, or under the protection of Great Britain. I understood also, that the Arabs were themselves conscious that in consequence of this process, and of the general incidence of British policy, Zanzibar Island was in course of absorption by England. It was certainly said—not on doubtful grounds, I believe—that in the rising city of Dar es Salām on the mainland, the late Sultan Syud Majid saw his future capital.

Whether I be right or wrong in my interpretation of what I heard, there seems to be now no doubt that the sentiment of England in reference to slavery has either artificially checked a natural process, or has prevented a result which politico-economical considerations might otherwise have led us to anticipate.

Time was when the British Indian at Zanzibar owned slaves without remark. Later time was when the native of Kutch, not being a British subject, owned and worked slaves under the sanction of Arab custom. These times have quite passed away. Neither the British Indian, nor the native of Kutch, can lawfully possess a slave in Zanzibar unless he first shakes off—

which is not easy—all claim to British protection, and all obedience to British law.[1]

As I have before shown, nearly all the labour in Zanzibar is slave, or—better expressed—serf labour. The serfs go with the estate, and if the estate goes openly into British Indian ownership, the purchaser loses the slaves, for they are freed by the consul.[2] Though he cannot own slaves, he might perhaps pay for their labour, as everyone else must do at Zanzibar. But everything connected with the slave in the way of business is a danger to the British subject; and the British Indian, imperfectly apprehending our policy, and perhaps utterly mistaking its root and essence, must always be uncertain about any bargain in which slaves, however remotely, are concerned. Slaves, or slave labour, and land, being the complements of each other in Zanzibar, the transfer of the latter to British Indian subjects must now be attended with great difficulties, and possibly with much legal fiction, detrimental to the interests of both seller and buyer.

A singular example of the complications attendant on the blind contact of our sentiment with the state of political economy at Zanzibar, may be found in a recent parliamentary paper.[3] Some forms of labour contract between British Indian subjects had come before our consul, and, judging that it was important 'in the present very unsatisfactory state of things' that the methods by

[1] Dr. Kirk doubts whether it will hereafter be difficult to assume Arab nationality. See Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 94.

[2] See Parl. Paper, Class B, 1869, p. 60, 1870, p. 55, &c.

[3] Slave Trade, Class B, 1872, pp. 42, 43, and 52.

which the three thousand odd British subjects at Zanzibar were in the habit of getting over the labour difficulty, should be recorded, he forwarded two of these forms of contract to the home-authorities for their opinion. One form, which mentioned the supply of so much labour—although necessarily slave labour—the consul was of opinion might be safely adopted. The other, which mentioned the supply of so many slaves, the consul was of opinion could not stand, and informed the British Indians to that effect. The law officers of the Crown in England, however, to whom the matter was referred, pronounced both forms equally illegal. The labour was slave labour, and consequently could not be lawfully agreed about by any British subject.[1]

What is to become of a condition of things in which a British Indian, or, for the matter of that, every Englishman, must, if he make contracts at all, make illegal ones, I am unable to conceive. It must be presumed that rather than cease business, and quit the place he is making his fortune in, the Indian will find some legal subterfuges, sufficient for his purpose; but, if he is legally driven to one subterfuge, he may be illegally tempted to more; and one cannot help sincerely regretting that England has no way of dealing with facts of this kind except the method pursued by the fabled ostrich—hiding its head in the sands of its own law, and refusing to recognise what passes outside.

All witnesses of competent judgment believe that the absorption, by purchase or otherwise, of Zanzibar Island

[1] But see apud.

into 'Greater Britain,' would deal to the export slave trade the heaviest possible blow—many believe it would deal the only effectual blow. Surely, if these authorities argue with justice, there could not be a policy more worthy of the philanthropic statesman than to encourage all natural processes by which such change would be facilitated, or at any rate not to thwart it artificially. Here is no doing evil that good may come; the evil—if it is an evil—is being done under our eyes in any case, and we distinctly lay it down that we will not attempt to interfere with it. If we could abolish the fact of the general employment of slave labour in Zanzibar, well and good; but we do not aim at such a thing and only hope that shutting our eyes tight will in some way affect it.

Well, we do affect it, but how? If we are to believe a witness whom there is not the smallest reason for disbelieving,[1] 'the estates worked by slave labour, and owned by Indo-British subjects, have been disposed of to Arabs, a very few having been retained merely as places of resort on festive occasions.'

In the above quotation we have in epitome the results of Imperial policy in Zanzibar. If I have been able to impress on the reader's mind any clear view of the polity of that territory, I think he will agree with me in thinking that it should be reconsidered. The view of the home Government is not that of a particular party—it would be equally followed by all parties—but it is the result of the national way of looking at a great question from one side only, whenever its senti-

[1] Dr. Christie in 'East African Slave Trade,' p. 50.

ment is warmly engaged. Estates which were passing by the natural operation of economic laws into hands over whom England has a strong control, and whose labourers might have been gradually, but surely, raised in moral and intellectual condition, are carelessly thrust back into hands free of English influence, who never have made, and never will make, progress in the direction which England most desires.

It may of course be argued that England has a clear objection to possess Zanzibar. But this is to say that she has a clear objection to suppress the export slave trade in the quickest way. It may also be argued that if she succeeds in limiting the import of slaves into Zanzibar Island now, she may hereafter succeed in abolishing the import by the same process of applying pressure. Granting all this, it still remains that the more we encourage the settlement of British Indians in Zanzibar, the more do we smooth the path for future slave-trade suppressive efforts. Wherever we discourage it, we are building up barriers which we must hereafter throw down, perhaps by force. It is almost impossible to doubt that the uncertainty in which the labour question now rests at Zanzibar must act as a direct blow to Indian immigration.

Great Britain is represented at Zanzibar by a political officer who is a Consul under the Imperial Government and a Political Agent under the Indian authorities. The present holder of the office, Dr. Kirk, is nominally 'acting' in that capacity, though his work has been more permanent than usual. Of him it is sufficient for me to say that all naval officers who have met him,

either in an official relationship, in private friendship, or, which is more usual, in both, will heartily re-echo the recommendation of the Parliamentary Committee of 1871, that 'no technical rules should be allowed to interfere with his appointment as Political Agent at Zanzibar.'

The duties of our representative at Zanzibar relate primarily to the care of the 3,700 Indians and the 22 English who form the British Colony there. Secondarily he represents our policy of slave-trade suppression at the Sultan's Court; thirdly, he is the channel of diplomatic correspondence with the Sultan; and lastly, he is the judge of the Vice-Admiralty or prize Court for the trial of reputed slave-trading vessels apprehended by the naval officer.

The double office which he holds under each of the Governments renders his position a most difficult one, for it not infrequently happens that a line of policy directed by Bombay, and entered on forthwith, must be reversed on receipt of contrary orders from England.[1] The home Government is not troubled about Zanzibar in any way except as being the nucleus of the slave trade. Bombay has a large direct trade with Zanzibar, and British Indian subjects, or the subjects of protected States, are perpetually coming and going thither. While, therefore, an English Minister may, in dictating a dispatch to the British Consul at Zanzibar, take a line in which the suppression of the slave trade is the exclusive object, the Indian

[1] The recently established mail service will doubtless mitigate this anomaly.

Minister, writing from Bombay to the Political Agent, may exclude slave-trade questions absolutely.

The Rao of Kutch, as the prince of a State under England's protection, some years back placed all his subjects in Zanzibar under the English law administered by the consul.

It is absolutely foreign to English ideas that there should be a State within a State, administered by a Consul who is also governor and magistrate; but such a condition of things is familiar enough to the Indian Civil Servant, and excites no remark at Zanzibar. There the consul has full jurisdiction, civil and criminal (within limits), over British subjects and the subjects of British protected States. The importance of the position may be understood from the numbers under his care, and from the fact of their immense value in the commercial world of Zanzibar. British Indian subjects farm and administer the customs, and carry on either directly or indirectly the greater part of a trade supposed to amount to upwards of 700,000*l.* annually.[1]

Whatever estimate may be formed of the commerce of Zanzibar is an approximation only; and those who know best are satisfied that the tendency is to under-estimation. That the trade has enormously increased, and is still increasing, none entertain any doubt. In Syud Said's time the farmers of the customs paid him but 50,000 dollars as rent: the present Sultan receives 310,000 dollars annually from the same source. It is

[1] Exclusive of slaves.

estimated that the value of the imports rose from 246,000*l.* in 1861 to 434,000*l.* in 1867.

The chief product of Zanzibar is ivory:—elephant, rhinoceros, and hippopotamus, its annual value being 670,000 dollars.[1]

Cloves come next, being valued at 320,000 dollars.[2] Slaves come third on the list, being set down at 270,000 dollars. Fourth in order, and bracketed as equally valuable, are copal (a resin), orchella weed (a dye), and cowries (the shells which are coin on the West Coast of Africa and in parts of India). Each of these products reaches 100,000 dollars in annual value. So we may pass down the list until we come to the least important item of all—cotton; of which only 600 dollars worth is produced.

The imports include most species of European and Indian manufacture—cotton cloth, as the medium of exchange all over Central Africa, being the largest, and taking up itself more than half the total value, namely 1,350,000 dollars.

The direct commercial interest of the British Empire in Zanzibar is more than three times as great as that of any other nation, but there is, I believe, only one English house represented there. Germany stands next in interest; then the United States; then Arabia, Persia, &c.; and lastly, France. The largest direct trade is with India, and it is this which gives England her great preponderance. Indirectly, England sends her cottons, as well as abundance of the other products of her labour, through Germany and France to Zanzibar.

[1] All of course from the mainland. [2] Chiefly from the islands.

The revenue of Zanzibar is not a public fund. It is the private fortune of the Sultan, and is derived from customs duties: a poll-tax on the aboriginal inhabitants of the island, Wahadimu,[1] as they are called: and the produce of his private estates. In all it is estimated to amount to 345,000 dollars or 73,000*l.* per annum. Out of this the Sultan pays 40,000 dollars to his brother at Muskat;[2] and in Syud Majid's time a considerable sum went as a subsidy to the Northern Arabs. The present Sultan, Syud Burgash, has, I believe, discontinued this impolitic practice. In the chapter on the Northern slave trade I estimated that the Sultan's direct revenue from the tax on slaves may be 10,500*l.* per annum, and it might at first sight be supposed the abolition of the trade would mulct the fortune of the Sultan directly, in that sum. This need not be so, however; part of the loss—if not the whole of it—might fall on the farmers of the customs. It is universally supposed that the profits of the farmers are far beyond the value of the work done; and if the abolition of the tax on slaves would clear away a single complication, one would suppose that a little management of figures with a rising revenue might break the direct connexion of the Sultan with the slave trade, and

[1] Now (1873) said to be abolished.

[2] The writer of a pamphlet published under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, professing to use the best authorities, does not hesitate to state that this 40,000 dollars is derived directly from the duty on slaves, and insinuates that an increased slave trade is the result of the payment. Such carelessness of statement defeats the end in view, and cannot be too strongly reprehended. There is, of course, no connexion between the subsidy and the slave trade.

yet leave no one perceptibly the worse for it. The farmers of the customs are under British protection and amenable to British pressure in a way in which the Sultan is not.

There was a little time ago a somewhat widely-spread notion that the ivory trade and the slave trade of Zanzibar were linked together inseparably. It was supposed that the slaves and the ivory were bought in the interior; that one carried the other to the coast, where both were sold. This notion is now quite exploded. The ivory porters are generally free men, of a nature savage and wild, according to Burton, but certainly bending their natures to the very hard work of porterage to and from the interior. I have seen them in the outskirts of the city at their food, but was not struck with anything peculiar in that, or their manner of eating it: nor did their readiness to answer questions put to them impress me as denoting their savage character. The ivory, and all other trade in the interior, is of course connected with slave labour, and the slave trade proper is carried on side by side with what we call legitimate commerce. But the slave labour used is that of the most intelligent and trustworthy of the Zanzibar slaves—generally of the Wazalia or native-born. So also, the slave is bought, captured, or stolen in the interior, just as the ivory is, and reaches the coast as part of a general cargo of merchandise.[1]

As in these quarters of the globe one is perpetually

[1] 'East African Slave Trade,' pp. 35, 62, etc. Dr. Kirk in Parl. Papers.

thrust back mentally on first principles, so at Zanzibar there is no escape from them. In nothing did they more forcibly strike me than in questions of currency.

There is no State coinage at Zanzibar, and English, French, and American moneys form the media of exchange. Every sort of inconvenience arises in consequence of the struggle of each Political Representative to give his own country's coinage a value and artificial support over the others. Formerly the values of each coinage were arbitrarily settled by proclamation. The English sovereign lost, and the rupee gained. All French money lost and all American money gained. This plan is now (1869) abolished. The Sultan has given the Austrian dollar as the standard of account. There are none of them in circulation,[1] and the value of the other coinage, not being settled by law in terms of the Austrian dollar, fluctuates exactly as any other commodity. So that a man may perpetually play with exchanges; may change his rupees for American dollars, gain on that transaction; wait for a rise in American money or a fall in French, and exchange again at a profit. All property is therefore subject to violent changes of value. The English consul has proclaimed that the value of all coinage amongst British subjects shall be the assay value given by the Bombay Mint. This prevents fluctuation in bargains between British subjects, but goes no farther. The danger here was that coin would leave the country, as a profit could generally be made by its export to its own land. The most striking result, however, of the

[1] Burton speaks as though this was not the case in his time.

singular conditions was that inquiry had to be made every day, before business transactions took place—even providing for household wants—as to the amount of change due to the coin intended for expenditure. The change for a shilling, to put it into homely language, was sometimes only elevenpence, and sometimes thirteen or fourteen pence.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE SLAVE MARKET AT ZANZIBAR.

THE chief object of attraction to every Englishman on first reaching Zanzibar is undoubtedly the slave market. More attractive still is it to the naval officer, who here sees the source of the great black stream he is eternally plotting how to dam up, and which is always breaking through his barriers and escaping in runnels and driblets. By all nations and by all classes it should be remarked and studied, for it is the last link of a decaying chain which must soon part and leave small trace of its whereabouts.

I was not half-an-hour on shore at Zanzibar before I wended my steps in this direction, and have now to set down what I saw.

The fairly clean courts and alleys of the European quarter of the town, with their smooth pavements, soon gave place to a series of stony watercourses, partly choked with rubbish and filth, winding in and out amongst stone houses, ruined walls, crumbled masonry, and mat huts. The way led in a few minutes to a small open space of irregular shape, with a flooring composed of decayed garden stuff, stones, and mud, in unequal proportions.

There was a good deal of black cattle on hand this evening, but the market was apparently dull, and prices ranged low; I believe, however, I was early for business. There might have been perhaps 250 head on sale, and these were for the most part seated in the open. Grown-up males and females were separated. Some were ranged in long rows, with their legs stretched out before them; others, chiefly men and boys, squatted in small groups and chatted amongst themselves. The owners,[1] or persons in charge of the several groups, stood near each, talking quietly to them, or to their acquaintances amongst the crowd. Sometimes there was an inquiry about some particular individual in a group, and he or she would stand up and speak a few words in reply to questions. I saw the person in charge of a group of boys—he was a young Arab with some black blood in him—call one of them up and ask him some questions; then he looked narrowly at his eyes, and then placing his hand on his head raised the boy's eyelid with his thumb in precisely the same way as I have seen Dr. Chlorodyne raise my boy's eyelid when there was a sty in it; I also saw the boy dismissed to his seat with something very like a kindly pat on the head.

There were a large number of Arab gentlemen, merchants and business men, present, who lounged through the groups of slaves, pointing them out occasionally with the inevitable little cane or stick which every Arab with any pretensions to gentility always carries. One benevolent-looking old Arab

[1] Professional auctioneers, really.

gentleman attracted much of my notice. He had, apparently, many friends, with whom he was on familiar terms, and he conversed with them pleasantly about a lawsuit which he had on hand. It related to a difference respecting a sum of money, but it did not trouble him much, for he was quite jocular on the matter, and evidently felt sure of getting the best of it. When he came to a 'likely lot' amongst the slaves, he chatted about them, spoke to them in a cosy, sociable way, as though he bid them be good boys and girls and take care to mind their books. When there was nothing noticeable about any slaves near at hand, he reverted to his law-suit and got still cosier and more sociable, until at last he passed out of view.

My guide now pointed to a slave then in process of sale, and we went over to the spot. The article was female; fat and strong, but not well favoured as to beauty. Indeed, to speak truth I doubt whether a face over which a curry-comb has apparently been drawn, could exactly be considered beautiful in our view. But the process of being made 'beautiful for ever' is a simple one in these parts; and a good sound scarification in early youth gives the cheeks and forehead a delightful resemblance to a ploughed field, which is so very permanent that no negro husband need be much afraid of a black Madame Rachel's bills in after-life.

The seller of this piece of goods was a bullet-headed, round-faced, dark Arab, who rested his arm lightly on the damsel's shoulder, and leaned lazily against a post. Bids were few and far between, and his auctioneering was drowsy work.

'Eighteen dollars, eighteen dollars,' drawled our friend, using the Swahili equivalent of the English words, 'eight-een—dol-lars.'

He will certainly fall asleep in the middle of the last word.

A gentleman strolls past in his flowing robes—

'What's the price?'

'Eight-een dollars. Eight-een. Eight-een.' Every time he got to the Swahili equivalent of the 'een' he rolled his head a trifle and shifted his hand a trifle—

'No advance on eight-een?'

No advance coming, he presently strolled away, leading his chattel by the hand, who strolled likewise, smiling.

There were several other girls and women near at hand whom I now observed with some attention.

They were decorated for the day in the latest fashions.

Their hair was newly frizzed, and worked up into innumerable little ridges from the forehead backwards, much resembling the drills left by a turnip-sowing machine on the land. Some boasted a trifling bead ornament or two in their ears and nostrils. Circles of blue-black khol surrounded each eye, giving it a horrible mask-like appearance. The chief ornament, however, was a heavy black line—apparently drawn with lampblack and oil—over one eyebrow, arched upwards, crossing the nose with a downward peak, and regaining the upward arch over the other eyebrow.

I heard one girl say something to her neighbour in reference to this ornament. The other girl smilingly

replied, and put her face out to the first. She then, taking the end of her dress, carefully touched up the black line over the other's nose, which I now observed was somewhat irregular in curve. The transaction was a simple one and spoke many things to my inner consciousness.

If I was reminded of bright little Milly, and her 'My goodness, Cissy, your wreath is all awry! *do* let me settle it for you,' as, after rather a hard gallop, she looked into her friend's face—neither Milly nor Cissy must think the worse of me. They are pretty, bright, and fair; and N'quando and Mabruki were ugly, dull, and black; but the touch of nature made the whole world kin to me for the moment, and the coarse, rugged hand and arm, fiddling and rubbing at a great black daub, became the white, tapered fingers delicately adjusting the flowers which graced the brow of a blooming English girl.

At another part of the market, sitting against a wall, were a group of what were pointed out to me as the most valuable female slaves. These wore dark veils thrown back from their foreheads, and were crowned, not unpicturesquely, with glittering spangles entwined in the folds of the veil. They wore more ornaments, and besides the black line, a broad band of filthy bright yellow paint invaded the upper part of the forehead and the lower part of the hair. I saw none of these put up for auction or sold: and with a glance at them and a final one round the market, I left it for church at the mission house, and for tea with the Bishop.

I have set down above, as truthfully as I can, exactly what I saw on my first visit to the slave market. I endeavoured to look on it without either the passion due to an old prejudice, or a reactionary sentiment which I detect in myself. Those things which I saw, I have set down: what I did *not* see, I must also state. I did not see violence or rudeness of any kind; neither did I see coarseness or indecency. I did not see any preparation made for the employment of force: nor anything approaching to dissent from the proceedings on the part of the blacks. The whole arrangement betokened a low, thoughtless, cattle-like style of idea on the part of both sellers and sold; but I could not help feeling that if we really want to suppress the system of forced labour called slavery, we must create a strong dislike to the system on the part of the labourers, which is absent now.

A few days after my first visit, I paid a second to the slave market, rather later in the evening. I was the more anxious to see it again, because some of the officers had described their seeing gross indecencies towards the women practised by intending buyers, and as I had seen no signs of anything of the kind, I was anxious to verify it.

The market was well on when we arrived. There were perhaps twenty auctioneers, each attending a separate group, and selling away as hard as possible. One of the officers counted over 300 slaves present, and it was clear several groups had only just been landed. My former friend with the bullet-head was dozily naming his eighteen or twenty dollars, as the

case might be, altogether untouched by the excitement which seemed to govern some of his brethren or rivals.

One of these strongly attracted my notice. He was a young man, not altogether Arab in appearance, and with a not unpleasant cast of countenance. His counter was laid out with a choice selection of goods from the continent, and he was selling them, like a steam-engine.

His 'lot' appeared to be lately imported; they were all young boys and girls, some of them mere babies; and it was amongst them that the terribly painful part of the slave system was to be seen. I mean the miserable state, apparently of starvation, in which so many of these poor wretches are sometimes landed. The sight is simply horrible, and no amount of sophistry or sentiment will reconcile us to such a condition of things. Skeletons, with a diseased skin drawn tight over them, eyeballs left hideously prominent by the falling away of the surrounding flesh, chests shrunk and bent, joints unnaturally swelled and horribly knotty by contrast with the wretched limbs between them, voices dry and hard, and 'distantly near' like those of a nightmare—these are the characteristics which mark too many of the negroes when imported. All, however, are by no means so. I have seen in the same batch, some of these skeletons, and others as plump as possible. In this very group it was so. The emaciation in the slaves imported originally into Zanzibar must arise before leaving the mainland. It would not be possible to pull them down in the two or three days' voyage between Quiloa (Kilwa) and Zanzibar, and I take it

this land travelling is the most terrible ordeal the slave has to go through. Some persons say the thing is inevitable, and that in the heart of Africa this starvation is a common lot. Others, with probably more truth, say that it is exceptional, confined to belts of countries which the slave hunters have devastated. My own impression is that it is due simply to the want of forethought so wonderfully characteristic in the Arab. Instead of providing sufficient provisions for their living merchandise on their way to the coast, they trust much to the chapter of accidents, and find themselves and their freight dying of starvation in crossing a desert tract of country. I should be inclined to propose to the Sultan to remit a small portion of the duty on well-fed slaves when landed, and to impose a small increase on the emaciated ones. It must be gently done. A heavy fine would be the death warrant of all the sickly and ailing before they left the coast for Zanzibar.[1]

My Arab auctioneer was working away at a boy when I first noticed him. He had reached 16 dollars, but there seemed to be no advance. I knew my friend to be selling, when I could only see his back, by the steady periodical working thereof, caused by his vigorous declamation.

'St—asher; St—asher; St—asher; St—asher; St—asher; St—asher,' &c., thus the auctioneer, not looking at anyone in particular, or seeming to attach any definite meaning to what he was doing. Only the

[1] The text having been written on the spot, I have thought it wise to let it stand, if only to show how easy it is to be mistaken in drawing inferences. Compare Chaps. II. and XXIII.

'St—asher' came out of him like a jet of steam, and shook his whole body and the body of the slave boy on whom his hand rested.

I addressed him through the interpreter,

'When did they land?'

Auctioneer. 'St—asher—two days ago—St—asher—St—asher,' &c.

I. 'What will you let him go for?'

Auctioneer. (He never leaves off). 'St—asher—St—asher—twenty dollars—St—asher,' &c.

No advance appearing on 'St—asher,' the boy was made to sit down, and a little girl about six years old put up.

A wizened Arab with a quiet face and one eye, was amongst the buyers. He looked at the child's little hands, and then stooped down and spoke to her with a smiling face. The child smiled in return, and I could not think that my wizened Arab would treat her *very* badly if he bought her. She was soon worked up to the regulation 'St—asher,' and two or three more bidders chimed in. The steam-engine worked faster and faster; he had got to 'Sebba—t'asher; Sebba—t'asher;' and in his hurry and work could only pluck at the dresses of probable purchasers.

Wizen-face and the rest of the buyers are all very calm and do not trouble their heads much about the matter, but the steam-engine will certainly burst his boiler if it goes on much longer. Wizen-face, impelled by a strong pull at his dress, advances a quarter of a dollar: steam-engine plucks him again, with an advance of another quarter, and goes on working madly. Wizen-face,

however, is not inclined to go further, and moves away. Steam-engine plucks him harder by the dress, and, never leaving off his 'Sebba—t'asher—noos,' which is now the price, stoops down and gathers the child up in his arms, seeming to say, 'Come, take the little thing—she is only an armful.' Wizen-face will not buy, however, after all, and steam-engine blows off his steam, and sets the little girl on the ground preparatory to getting the steam up over a fresh article.

At this moment my attention was attracted in another direction, by hearing a sound as of a drowsy humble bee chanting in monotone. Passing through the crowd in the direction of the sound, I became aware of a string of some eight negro girls, standing in a row and facing me. These girls were decorated in the highest style of the fashion before described, but they each had, besides, a sort of mantle of blue muslin thrown lightly round their shoulders, which, it struck me, they were rather proud of. The humble bee from whom the buzzing proceeded, was the auctioneer in charge of the sale of these girls. In appearance he looked like a benevolent edition of Mr. Fagin as we first make his acquaintance in the pages of 'Oliver Twist.' His beard was white and flowing, his nose hooked and prominent, and his eyes half closed and dreamy. He carried the regulation cane under his arm, was sauntering round and round his stock of goods, and making undecided changes in the 'sit' of the girls' attire with his disengaged hands. The drowsy buzzing which proceeded from his lips resolved

itself into distinct sounds when I got near enough to analyse them.

The sounds were, 'Thelātha washerin wa noos;' 'thelātha washerin wa noos;' which, when separated into their proper words, became Swahili for 'twenty-three and a half,' twenty-three-and-a-half dollars being the upset price of each or any of the lot before me.

This humble bee differed from the other auctioneers, inasmuch as he did not seem to connect his buzzing chant with his stock-in-trade.

'Thelātha washerin wa noos, thelātha washerin wa noos, thelātha washerin wa noos;' it was more a song to pass away the time than an announcement of the upset price of his lots, as he sauntered backwards and forwards, now re-settling a fold of muslin which he had unsettled on his last passage, now patting the shoulder of this one, and now altering the position of the arm of that one, and never ceasing to chant the while.

I studied the faces of these girls very closely to try and detect what their feelings were on the subject, but it is almost as hopeless to penetrate the thoughts of a negro through his expression, as it is to get at those of a sheep by the same process. I could see neither pleasure, pain, nor any other active sentiment in their demeanour, or expression. Absence of thought, rather than presence of indifference, pervaded each countenance, and I could not help speculating whether it were more true that the thoughts which we, in our state of mental energy, would consider proper to such an occasion, were really present in these creatures' minds, but hidden from me by the negro

conformation of features: or whether the thoughts were really absent. If I am to judge by what I have seen of the negro in his natural state, I must give it that the thought is absent.

I got my interpreter to ask one girl whether she liked it or no, but the only answer obtainable was that careless jerk out of the chin, which we associate with sulky indifference.

Passing from this group, I strolled to the wall against which were seated the superior slave women, whom I had noticed on a previous day. These were in charge of a jovial gentleman, with a sense of the comic in his demeanour, who took no apparent trouble to effect sales and whiled away the time whittling at a big stick. These slaves, I understood, had been some time in servitude, and came with characters from their former masters; hence their value. I could obtain no account of themselves or their feelings from these people. Stolid indifference as usual was marked in their faces and replies. The auctioneer seemed so taken up with the fun of the thing, that I could only get jokes out of him. By the way, this gentleman forcibly reminded me of Ali Baba, as I, in company with my children, had seen him at Covent Garden. Failing, therefore, to advance in my knowledge, I led the way from the market, which I did not afterwards re-visit.

I did not see, in open market, that revolting examination of the muscle of women for sale, which we know must go on. Such examinations were nominally

private. The women being taken aside for the purpose.

It is of course impossible to see human beings penned and sold like cattle, without strange thoughts and certain undefined feelings of nausea and disgust. To those who are unaccustomed to control their sentiments by means of analysis, the sight appeals with a force impelling to almost immediate action. It is as a rule dangerous to allow British seamen to land at Zanzibar, on account of this slave market: the bluejacket is impelled to make a clearance of the place, which he has more than once done on the spur of the moment, and such an interference with vested interests would rouse the fiercest indignation of the Arab, were it not his custom to regard all things English as beyond his comprehension. 'God is great to have created a people so confirmed in eccentricity,' and the latter must be accepted in faith even should it attack the slave market.

It is, I believe, to be understood that the government of the late Sultan Majid was not unready to abolish the public scandal of the market for a consideration, which, however, the English Government did not see fit to grant. It is questionable to my mind whether, except as a step towards abolishing slavery, the abolition of the public market would be of much value. Slaves would pass from hand to hand by private contract instead of by public sale, but this would not ameliorate their condition or limit the import.

CHAPTER XX.

THE CENTRAL AFRICAN MISSION.[1]

A HAZY notion that there was a society bearing the above title and in some way connected with Dr. Livingstone; and a knowledge that there was a certain Bishop Tozer at Zanzibar—in whose charge, by-the-by, our naval stores were placed—constituted the sum total of my information relative to the 'Universities' Mission to Central Africa' previous to my visit to Zanzibar. What I have now to say of it is on short personal acquaintance, and by so much, liable to crude misstatements.

I suppose very few naval men can clear themselves from that general prejudice against missions and missionaries which is decidedly current in the service, and which, rightly or wrongly founded, sways our general opinion. Our representative missionary is never the man endued with the spirit of a Christian martyr, utterly careless of personal comfort or convenience, bold to rashness in confronting danger, and absolutely oblivious of all ends and aims except

[1] It may be necessary to point out that the views expressed in this chapter are perfectly independent. They are derived from personal observation and the published documents of the Mission itself.

the single one of persuading the greatest numbers possible to accept the Christian beliefs and systems. Our typical representative is, on the contrary, what schoolboys call a 'sawney;'—a man who will weep copiously and publicly over his own sufferings and self-denials, such as they are; a man of petty jealousies and womanish complaints, who seems to have taken up missionary life in default of success in any other line, and who goes maundering about and whimpering over his difficulties; whose want of breadth of view and largeness of mind attaches him fanatically to the tortuous paths of barbarian policy, of which the narrow, fearful, and cunning course must at last be met, dammed up, and turned, by the rough argument of the British rifle. Rightly or wrongly, our little wars are nearly always reputed to be the work of ignorant missionaries, who, gaining an influence over native princes, are incapable of advising them for their good.[1]

Then, again, we see so small an amount of practical good resulting from the labours of missionaries. We may be told that the spiritual life of many who are mixed up with our everyday affairs abroad in barbarous or semi-civilised countries has been so much changed for the better, and yet, as a rule, we do not see it The idiosyncrasies of character which we call vices, if peculiar to the people before the arrival of missionaries, remain peculiar to them afterwards: and our rough-and-ready minds refuse to think that if a man

[1] I would have the reader to note that I am describing a prejudice, not stating facts.

is not more truthful, less passionate, less given to lay his hands on what is not his own, and so on, he is no more Christian than he was before. We know that there is a considerable section of the religious world in England which places no great stress on these outward formalities; and a Christian in their view is one who has thoroughly mastered their system of Christian metaphysics as a science. In their view, cheating your neighbour is a much more pardonable offence than the expression of a doubt as to the common interpretation of the words 'original sin.' And yet I honestly believe that naval officers as a body are not—on the face of matters—unready to think the best of any fresh instances of missionary labour. I have seen them quite affected at a native Christian service, and only awakened from their pleasant dream by the knowledge that the devout worshippers were engaged in many species of villany. I am also quite confident that there is no class of the British community who would more rejoice in the spread of that kind of Christianity which is moral as well as religious, than the British naval man. We are altogether too much accustomed to notice earnest religious feelings which in no degree touch the every-day life, to accept any other kind of Christianity. In our dealings with the half-civilised races we find the honestest men professing the most dishonest faith; and those of the purest faiths showing themselves the greatest scoundrels. I am not sure whether I use exaggeration when I say that we most distrust the Christian convert; our personal and hearsay experience is against him. So we learn to dissociate the man and his faith,

and will hardly believe in the results of any missionary efforts which do not re-associate the man and the religion. Such, I believe, to be a fair representation of the bias of the naval mind respecting missionary enterprise: it is necessary to give it, in order to balance what I may hereafter say with regard to missions in general and the Central African Mission in particular.[1]

Missions to barbarous races are undertaken with vast variations in the objects proposed to be attained, and it only follows as a natural sequence that there should be as vast a variety in the proposed modes of action. I shall probably be told that my assertion in its first branch is untrue, for that all missionary societies have one grand object in view—namely, the 'preaching of the Gospel.' But I take leave to think that there is no phrase more meaningless at the present day than the foregoing—meaningless, not from absence of all meaning, but from the unending varieties of meaning which the words are now capable of bearing. And even were this not so, there are two very distinct motives leading to this preaching of the Gospel, utterly irreconcilable, and compelling a totally different method of procedure in the professors of either.

The common-sense view, held, I hope, by much the larger section of the community, is, that while the preaching of the Gospel is an injunction laid on portions of Christians by the highest authority, which must therefore be obediently carried on irrespective of any other considerations, yet that Christianity

[1] It must be admitted, in extenuation of the naval prejudice, that we commonly see only the worst specimens of the convert.

itself is such a good thing, making life on the earth so much more worth having, advancing all manner of upward progress, and checking all manner of corrupt re-action, bringing peace on earth and good-will, not only towards men but amongst men, that it is of all things desirable to encourage its spread.

The other view, which one would fain hope was more theoretical than practical, but which I have been personally shocked to hear announced much too often and in too many quarters, is governed by a despair about the spread of even nominal Christianity; a terrible contentment over the expected condemnation of the majority of mankind; and a startling arrogance in appropriating the kindness of the Almighty to a small section of his creatures. 'Think not I came to bring peace on earth—I came not to bring peace but a sword.' 'Let us preach the Gospel for a testimony against the wickedness of the heathen, and consequently of our own superior goodness'—these are the leading thoughts of this section of mission promoters.

It is manifest that the method pursued by holders of these opposite sentiments will be violently opposed, and the kind of Gospel preached by one will differ very materially from that announced by the other.

But although mission promoters are in the first place divided into these two distinctive classes, each class is itself infinitely subdivided according to their view of the meaning of the words 'Preaching the Gospel.'

Two of the most prominent of these subdivisions are those who connect, and those who disconnect

civilisation and Christianity. It has been the fortune of the Universities Mission to Central Africa to represent first one, and then the other of these subdivisions with great strength and purpose.

In the report presented to the meeting at Cambridge in 1859, I find the following paragraph:—'It will be understood that the great object of the Mission is to make known the Gospel of Christ; but, as the Committees are well aware that, in Dr. Livingstone's own words, "civilisation and Christianity must go on together," they think it advisable to state that it will be their aim to encourage the advancement of science and the useful arts, and to direct especial attention to all questions connected with the slave trade as carried on in the interior of Africa.' Bishop Tozer, his staff, and general method of proceeding, combine to give a direct denial to Dr. Livingstone's dictum; and no one can avoid being interested in an experiment so theoretically complete for testing the question.

To my own mind there appears some sort of confusion in Dr. Livingstone's phrase. One might agree to the statement that civilisation and Christianity do, as a matter of experience, go together; and yet one might deny that they can well be taught together, or that the teachers of Christianity are the best teachers of civilisation. At home our prejudices are all against this mingling of matters. A teacher of civilisation must be specially a good administrator in civil and criminal questions, and the clergy are confessedly bad ones. It has long seemed to me that the Reformation was quite as much an outburst of this opinion

as a religious movement; and I think that the feeling survives in the modern Protestant.

But there are those who look upon the word 'civilisation' as representing a variety of material appliances—roads, canals, systems of improved cultivation, machinery &c.—not considering that these are themselves the results of settled and liberal institutions, and cannot exist apart from them. Teaching the natives of one village how to construct improved houses, is of particularly small advantage when they are perpetually called away from their house-building to do a little house-burning. Where there is no law, greater material prosperity in one community is but a challenge to attack by others; and I know of no case in which material prosperity preceded respect for law. However, the civilised natives of Europe are the possessors both of liberal institutions and material conveniences, and can most assuredly introduce them side by side, one strengthening and upholding the other.

This is all I think beside the question of religion. Those who hold that all our liberal institutions are due to Christianity, will not deny that such may be imposed with success on a savage race, prior to the preaching of Christianity;[1] while those who do not

[1] It is remarkable, as a strong confirmation of this view, that the missionaries of the London Missionary Society, who have been able after the labour of half a century to elevate Christianity into the position of the State religion of Madagascar, did not make, or, I think, attempt to make, *one single convert* in the first ten years. They devoted themselves entirely to reducing the language to fixity, to educating the young, and to training the older in the useful arts. In 1828, ten years after their first establishment, they had 32 schools and 4,000 scholars, but not a single

connect the Christian religion with our civil freedom can urge nothing against it.

Thus I think a civil mission might logically be launched into, say, African territory, whose objects shall be settled government, just laws, and the spread of the arts of life amongst the negroes. The only drawback would be, that those whom we came to benefit might be our greatest enemies, and for some time such a mission would probably require to maintain itself by force of arms.

Perhaps a successful instance of such a civil mission may be found in Rajah Brooke's settlement of Sarāwak in Borneo. I am not aware of the state of the settlement now; but in former years, when I was acquainted with it, the Rajah's work seemed an unmixed and acknowledged benefit to the natives. Here the civil mission paved the way, and the religious mission followed. The advantage of the Rajah's position was, that when force was required, there was nothing incongruous in his using it and heading it—I mean that he sacrificed no part of his theory of government in the eyes of the natives, when he took the severe warlike measures which he was sometimes compelled to take for the preservation of order. Such a mission is primarily civilising, and secondarily religious; and in such a mission the lay governor is supreme, and the missionary proper, subordinate.

I do not remember to have heard of a purely religious civil mission which has been successful;[1] yet,

native of Madagascar had been baptized. They suppose that there are 50,000 professing Christians in the island now. See the *Martyr Church*.

[1] If the Madagascar Mission be quoted against me, I must say that there

except perhaps in China, missions to barbarous independent tribes become almost inevitably politico-religious, with the evil results hinted at.

A mission which confines itself purely to announcing the message of Christianity, which aims only at changing the moral tone of the people appealed to, and makes no direct attempt to alter their customs or manner of living, except indirectly through the new views of life which the reception of the Gospel message is presumed to call up, such a mission may also be logically launched with a hope of success equal to the extent of belief in the innate power of Christianity.

But neither the sort of civil mission typified in Rajah Brooke's government, nor the purely religious mission typified, as we shall see, most strongly in the present state of the mission to Central Africa, is the kind of mission which we must understand to be intended by the report before quoted, or which, in agreement with that report, was started under the auspices of the universities in 1860.

The origin of the Universities Mission to Central Africa was a visit paid to Cambridge by Dr. Livingstone in the year 1857, and a lecture there delivered by him in the Senate-house. 'I go back,' said the traveller, at the close of his lecture, 'to Africa, to try to make an open path for commerce and Christianity. Do you carry out the work which I have begun. I leave it with you.' The words of the eminent speaker germinated, a committee was formed, which, inviting and

was a settled and very powerful government to begin with; that it was a purely civil mission for the first ten years, and that I understand it to be almost a purely religious mission now.

obtaining the co-operation of Oxford, presented its report to a great meeting in November 1859. The missionary society thus formed disclaimed any intention of constructing a new *permanent* society: their avowed object was to occupy the new ground of Central Intertropical Africa, and when it was in working order, to hand it over to the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts. The joint committees hoped to send out not fewer than six missionaries, headed, if possible, by a bishop.

While this was going on in England, the Venerable C. F. Mackenzie, Archdeacon of Natal, was on his way home from that colony on matters connected with a projected extension of missionary work in Natal to the Zulu country. Some months before the meeting mentioned above, he reached England, and was present as a listener and spectator merely.

What was wanted for the new mission was a head, and the known character of Mackenzie, his knowledge of African life and mission work, above all, his presence on the spot at the moment, pointed to him as the man to whom the bishopric and leadership of the mission should be offered. Accordingly, a day or two after the 'Great Zambesi Meeting,' as it was called, Mackenzie accepted the invitation to head the mission to Central Africa.

The plan of the mission under Mackenzie was to be 'the establishment of one or more stations in Southern Central Africa, which might serve as centres of Christianity and civilisation for the promotion of the spread

of true religion, agriculture and lawful commerce, and the ultimate extirpation of the slave trade.'

To carry out the plan successfully, it was intended to send out 'six clergymen with a bishop at their head, a physician, surgeon or medical practitioner, and a number of artificers, English and native, capable of conducting the various works of building, husbandry, and especially the cultivation of the cotton plant.'

To me the reading of this proposed end, side by side with the means considered sufficient for its attainment, with the shores of inter-tropical Africa spread out before my eyes, came with a sickening sensation. Without a high-wrought enthusiasm few great deeds can be done, but with a high-wrought enthusiasm come errors which make a world weep. Nothing short of this enthusiasm could have tempted a body of English gentlemen to attack the civilisation of the African continent with six clergymen and attendants, at an estimated cost of 2,000*l.* a year! It is not possible that either those who went, or those who abetted them in going, could have formed even an inadequate idea of the task they were entering on; and, though one must admire a greatness of heart in those who hoped to rend mountains with an ounce of gunpowder, one cannot avoid blaming the weakness of head which supposed that the cost of the attempt was counted. How sadly wild the ideas of Mackenzie himself were we see in his letters when he was preparing for his new work: —'It is a great undertaking this of the Zambesi,' he writes... 'Where we should settle is of course a thing to be decided; we are at present the "Central South

African Mission." I suppose it would be where Livingstone first struck the river at Linyanti, but it might not.'

Linyanti is in Mid Africa, equally distant from the Atlantic and Indian Oceans, and 600 miles from either. It was equivalent to proposing to establish a station at Cape Wrath which was to draw its supplies from the Land's End!

But, well or ill-considered, the mission was to go on. The most practically romantic of all nations was appealed to on its romantic side by enthusiastic men, and it responded by subscribing in a very few months 10,000*l.* in donations, with 1,000*l.* a year subscriptions. In October 1860, the mission party under Mackenzie sailed from Plymouth to the Cape of Good Hope. Here the bishop was consecrated, and the final arrangements for starting the mission completed; and early in January 1861, the first detachment of the mission party—namely, Mr. H. Waller, the 'lay-superintendent,' the Rev. H. C. Scudamore, S. A. Gamble, a carpenter, A. Adams, an agricultural labourer, and three blacks—freed slaves who had been christianised at Cape Town,—sailed in H.M.S. 'Sidon,' accompanied by the 'Pioneer,' Livingstone's steamer, for the mouths of the Zambesi. A week later the bishop, the Rev. L. J. Procter, and others left Simons Bay in H.M.S. 'Lyra,' for Natal first, and then for the Kongone mouth of the Zambesi. At Natal the bishop was joined by the Rev. H. Rowley, one of his clergy; and the whole missionary party found itself re-united inside the bar of the Kongone mouth of the Zambesi on February 9,

1861. Here was also the 'Pioneer,' and Dr. Livingstone, Charles Livingstone, and Dr. Kirk.

The troubles of the mission had already begun. The little flying column which was ready to project itself into the heart of Africa received a check before it even landed. Mackenzie had to yield to the representations of Dr. Livingstone, who pointed out that the season was unfavourable for ascending the river, and *that there was no spot known* where the missionaries might commence their labours with any prospects of success. Would any country but England send its sons to the ends of the earth to meet such a fact at the close of their journey? Would the gallantry of spirit be elsewhere found, which had impelled its sons to go, and which taught them to face such a fact and beat it down?

Livingstone advised postponing matters till he had explored the Rovuma, a river debouching north of Cape Delgado, and 600 miles from the mouth of the Zambesi. A proposal of this kind must have brought home to the missionaries some idea of the vastness of their project, and of the absolutely insufficient means at their disposal for carrying it out. There was an unexplored continent at their feet, and a decision had to be come to in a few hours whether they were to attack Moscow by way of Odessa or by way of St. Petersburg—the locality of Moscow not being ascertained!

Stolid reasoning prevailed over gallant enthusiasm. The missionaries fell back six hundred miles, on the island of Johanna.

A sentence in one of Mackenzie's letters written at

this time is so strongly typical of the high-wrought and grand yet unpractical spirit which animated him, and doubtless his whole party, that I must here transcribe it:—

'He' (Dr. Livingstone) 'proposed, that instead of going up the Zambesi and Shiré at once, to settle in such a place as he should advise, which was the plan we had all along considered our only one, we should postpone going up till he had explored the Rovuma, and ascertained whether or not it would give a better road to the district of the Shiré and Nyassa than that afforded by the Zambesi. I objected to this proposal that it would involve considerable and indefinite delay to us, and would transform us from a missionary body, ready to attempt at once to overcome the difficulties attending a settlement in a new country, into an exploring party, that we should be not only losing our time but embarrassing him by our presence.'

Poor Mackenzie in fact argued, and was ready to trust his life on the issue, that it was better to cast himself into the heart of Africa without plans or prospects, than to pause on the threshold and collect the necessary information before starting. Leading a party into an unexplored and unknown country, he believed that it would be to him as though it were explored.

The expedition to the Rovuma showed that no results were to be expected from prosecuting the search further; and the bishop found himself committed to the original plan of ascending the Zambesi, in the hope of finding a place where the party could maintain itself. Early in April the 'Pioneer' was steaming up the

Zambesi with the missionaries on board, and poor Mackenzie felt himself thinking more of the difficulties as they drew nearer. The greatest trouble had already shown itself; but none of the party seemed to recognise in the fevers by which they were attacked the deadliest bar to their success. Other troubles were more prominent. The 'Pioneer' was perpetually getting ashore, and the progress up the river was intolerably slow. It had taken them a week to reach the confluence of the Shiré with the Zambesi, a distance not probably over 150 miles, and it took them from May 16 to July 8 to ascend about the same distance up the Shiré. On that day therefore the mission party was more than two months from its base and source of supply—the sea.

And now the mission party, having reached the head of its water communication, proceeded to search for a station as near to it as possible. Their goods were landed, and they became for the time, that which the bishop had hoped they would not be—an exploring party. Two days had not passed before the fatally incongruous basis on which the mission was formed showed itself with overwhelming force. Planting religion and cotton; extirpating vice and the slave trade; a forcible interference with the customs of the people without using force—these were the objects aimed at, and commenced with a vengeance, at a distance of two months' journey from the sea in the heart of Africa. The incongruity was sadly typified by the bishop tramping wearily along with a bag of seeds slung behind, a can of

oil in front, a loaded gun in one hand, and his crosier in the other!

The party had struck north-east from Chibisa's village, opposite which the 'Pioneer' lay. The second day they reached the village of Mambarne, where they intended to rest. They had hardly settled down when a gang of eighty-four slaves was brought in; and almost before anything could be thought of, the slaves were forcibly rescued, and the missionaries found themselves responsible for the care of the whole of them. More slaves were afterwards captured, bringing the number up to ninety-eight.

There were other terrible troubles at hand. The preachers of the peaceful Gospel had planted themselves in a hornet's nest. The fierce Ajawa were the neighbours of the Manganja, amongst whom the party now rested, and were at war with them, as war is chronic in Africa. The Manganja were not slow to ask help from the powerful white man: what, in fact, was the use of a white man if he did not first defend the tribe amongst whom he sojourned, and then head it on its plundering expeditions? It is pitiful to think of the misery which these apostles must have felt when they found themselves debating to what extent they should shed blood, seeing it was almost necessary to shed some. He would be hard indeed who could smile without sympathy at poor Mackenzie's utterance over the hopeless subject: 'I thought I should be guided to a right course, if the emergency should occur . . . and praying for such guidance, I went on without coming to a decision on the point.'

It has been said that the forcible capture of the slaves altered the character of the mission; that is, altered the theory on which it proceeded. I think, on the contrary, that it was the natural outcome of Livingstone's original aphorism. The upsetting of the slave trade was one of the objects in view; and though the forcible and summary way in which it was begun could not have been contemplated, the action taken at first would certainly have followed later. The missionaries could not have assumed a neutrality towards the trade: they must have denounced it, and some of their party must soon have gone further.

But the ready-made tribe which was thrust on the bishop's hands determined a speedy choice of site for the station. One hundred additional mouths must be fed, and no food was to be had till they settled down.

Magomero, a spot sixty miles from Chibisa's, was chosen as the camping ground; and here our party proceeded to erect huts. The ground on which they rested was low, and was probably seen to be unhealthy, but—singular for a mission station—was chosen because it was easily defensible.

Dr. Livingstone left them at the end of July, but they were not yet deprived of the support of the 'Pioneer,' which still lay *sixty miles off* at Chibisa's. Before leaving them the Doctor warned them against taking any part in defending the Manganja against the Ajawa. They were sure, he said, to have numberless applications for warlike assistance, but they must not yield to them. This advice was no doubt sound if only it

could be acted on. But it was clear that, though they might decline to fight the Ajawa, the Ajawa might not decline to fight them. They could not live in the centre of a ravaged territory, and the only way to preserve the territory unravaged was to defend it; otherwise, to help the Manganja. These simple facts were too strong for the missionary party; and when the chiefs of the Manganja waited on them for an answer to their request for help, the reply they received was not 'no.'

Events hurried on. The bishop, as his biographer (whom I follow) points out, had become neither more nor less than the chief of an African tribe, and the chief must lead his tribe to war. On August 13, the missionaries, heading the Manganja, fought a successful battle with the Ajawa, twenty miles from Magomero.

This was their first expedition on the war path, but not their last; and it is more than sad to read of English clergymen leading raids into the neighbouring villages, burning and destroying them. Mackenzie has been blamed for acting on this policy; but no sensible layman, with the slightest personal acquaintance with savage races, can avoid acknowledging that any other policy was hopeless.

The wild experiment was fast hastening to its conclusion. November brought its torrents of rain, Magomero showed signs of becoming a swamp, and it was seldom that a majority of the party were not down in fever. Supplies ran short: food which was life to the Englishmen was not to be had. The flying

column had a stress put on it which was quite uncalculated, and it began to yield everywhere.

Help was to reach a point seventy miles down the Shiré on New Year's Day 1862; Mackenzie's sister and Mrs. Burrup, the wife of a missionary who had forced his way up to Chibisa's in a canoe in November, were at the mouth of the Zambesi, and were to come up in the 'Pioneer' to the appointed rendezvous. The bishop and Burrup started in a canoe from Chibisa's to descend the river and meet them. They fell in with disaster: their canoe was upset, their medicines and food destroyed, and they found themselves struck down with fever away from all hope of succour—for succour was a month behind its time—on an island at the confluence of the Ruo and Shiré. I need not prolong the dismal story. The bishop died in ten days. Burrup, with the remains of life left to him, buried his chief by the river side amid the rank tall grass; then he fell sadly back to Magomero, his life ebbing steadily on the way. He died at Magomero, ten days before his wife arrived at Chibisa's.

Thus miserably ended the active work of the mission in its first character of uniting Christianity and civilisation. I have now to trace roughly and briefly its progress towards the assumption of its second character, in which I became acquainted with it. It had then abandoned all idea of working the civil mission, and was content that Christianity should be put to the test as itself a civiliser.

There were yet more miseries in store for the unfortunate settlement of Magomero. The site was

badly chosen, and when the rains fell, the position became a swamp. The dispirited colony fell back to Chibisa's, and all mission labours came to an end. Bishop Tozer, the present head of the mission, had in the meantime been consecrated, and went out to take Mackenzie's place. On his arrival at Chibisa's, he found Waller the only member of the staff who was in good health. Scudamore and Dickinson were dead. The two other clergymen, Procter and Rowley, were dying by inches. The freed slaves, however, were doing well with gardens and plantations given to them by the chief: but so far as christianising them went nothing was or could be done. The savage surroundings had corrupted even the best of the blacks, and there was more or less relapse into barbarism on all sides. Livingstone was at Murchison Falls, and to him sped the new bishop for advice and assistance. It does not become me to speak harshly of the greatest traveller of the age; but the truth must be told before all things, and he cannot be acquitted of all blame by those who suffered on the banks of the Shiré. Although Mackenzie's biographer is careful to avoid a reproach, yet one cannot read that wretched tale and acquit the great discoverer of at least an unbalanced enthusiasm. I believe Livingstone considered that the mission might still carry out its original programme; but happily for its present standing and possible success, Bishop Tozer was able to form and act upon his own view. It was clear that the mission could not remain at Chibisa's on account of its unhealthiness, and no place near at hand existed to

which it could be moved. A retreat, however, was a confession of failure, and the members of the late mission who were ordered home to recruit their health, were strongly averse to a retreat. Common sense, which seems to have guided the steps of the new leader and his clergy, however, prevailed. The members of the new mission fell back to Mount Morambala, an eminence 4,000 feet high, near the confluence of the Shiré and Zambesi. Much difficulty was expected to arise respecting the freed slaves, but they themselves solved it by declining to leave Chibisa's; and a few orphans whom it was proposed to take without their consent were claimed by Livingstone, and carried to sea by him. On the top of this Mount Morambala the missionary party vegetated for several months. It was healthy enough, it is true, and pleasant enough; but there were few natives there, and the mission was simply a body of Englishmen residing in Africa without an object, or a chance of one. It was here I believe that the bishop took his resolution to alter the whole character of the work, and to begin the Central African Mission anew, with new aims, and a new method of attaining them.

The first thing was to break entirely with the dictum of Livingstone before quoted, that civilisation and Christianity must go on together; and the civilisers proper—five mechanics, all of them spoken of in the highest terms—were sent home. In taking this step, I do not at all understand that the missionaries in any way despised the advantages of cultivating the useful arts, but only that they felt that the useful arts were

not Christianity, and that a mission might fall between two stools which undertook the task of teaching both as of equal importance. They did not decide in favour of a christianising as against a civilising mission, but they held that the civilising must either grow of itself as a consequence of the christianising, or ought to be undertaken by other hands.

In order to devote themselves entirely to that which they considered their proper sphere, it was necessary to adopt a definite plan. The grand error of the mission hitherto had been that there was no base of operations. A flying column may often overrun a country, but no conquest is permanent unless there be a base on which all operations lean and with which the communications are kept up. To secure the base was therefore the first thought, and on careful review Zanzibar was chosen. It was the key to the mainland; its climate enabled Europeans to live; its government was settled, and was sufficiently under British influence to secure for the head-quarters of the mission, peace and tranquillity.

A removal to Zanzibar resulted from these considerations alone, and the mission occupied its base in the autumn of 1864.

The next point to be decided was as to the form in which the advance into the interior should be effected with the greatest likelihood of success. The idea was that negro troops would probably be the most useful in that field, and in this view the bishop and his clergy set themselves steadily down to the drilling of these

troops, and have ever since steadily persevered in this task.

Abandoning the cumbrous simile, it may be said that the whole aim of the mission was at first to train native missionaries for despatch into Central Africa. Though some other aims have arisen through the action of time and circumstance, I understand that the Central African Mission would be glad to shake off every subordinate claim upon it, and to devote itself entirely to training, despatching to the mainland, and overlooking an army of native missionaries, who should confine themselves entirely to instructing the mind—chiefly the young mind—of the East African negro. The plan, when it can be completely carried out, is to establish stations on the mainland, each under charge of an English clergyman who shall have under him more or fewer native teachers trained at Zanzibar, and that these shall radiate from the mainland station, the latter being one of many, radiating from Zanzibar. The idea is that if Christian teaching can be so spread, settled government will follow, and then the useful arts, industry, and commerce may be developed and thrive.

Such is the aim of the Central African Mission now. Theoretically it is complete. Logically it is without a flaw. What is it practically?

I might sum up the answer to this question almost in one word. It seems to be the only way in which any success has been attained in Africa by Protestant missions outside British territory, and those missions

which have most devoted themselves to that method seem to be most in favour of it.[1]

The Church Missionary Society has apparently fully adopted it, and I gather that their mission to Mombas is likely to select the Seychelles as its base.[2]

At home we know Africa chiefly as a red and yellow map in an atlas, and are very apt to think that whatever can be done with a map, can be done with Africa. I doubt if the size of the continent appeals to anyone sensibly, and when a mission on its borders exhausts years in mere preparation, one is apt to say time is wasted. There is really no waste of time, provided that, when the preparations for a further step are complete, the means are at hand to take it.

When I saw the mission in 1869 it was nothing more or less than a training school for negro missionaries: and I may be pardoned for saying that I could

[1] I might instance some of the West African Missions. The Yoruba Mission in 1865 had its base at Lagos. It had chief stations at Abbeokuta and Ibadan, with various out-stations. It had 12 European missionaries, 5 native ordained missionaries, and 42 other native teachers. The result was from 4,000 to 5,000 professing Christians, 16 schools, and 895 scholars.

The Niger Mission, also under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, is carried on entirely by native agency. But it wanted, in 1865, the base of operations, and its progress was checked in consequence.

The Baptist Missions at the Cameroons have imported trained negro teachers from the West Indies as their best agents.

Of course, native agency is largely employed by missions within British colonies, but that is not to the point. The mission to the Cameroons is the only one I know of, with an unprotected base, which employs the industrial school as a direct missionary agency; but my researches are limited. See 'Missionaries' in Parl. Rep., African West Coast, 1865.

[2] Too distant, I fear, for any ulterior views on Africa.

not help forming somewhat of a high opinion of the men who compelled themselves to sit steadily down to such drudgery. Where there is a prospect of adventure, romance, exploration, and change, something to have to talk about afterwards, I can understand a man without any very exalted aims undertaking missionary work, and I can also understand his forsaking it later. But I take it, the higher type is the man who can slave at a routine task—a task with all the romance taken out before he begins—and continue it year after year without flagging and without any particular outward encouragement except an approaching prospect of the next step.

When the Central African Mission is to take this next step decidedly, rests, I think, with those who are strong for the abolition of the East African slave trade. I shall show in a future chapter that there is very good reason to suppose that all the worst horrors, or what are believed to be the worst horrors of the trade will go on just as before, even after the export trade is entirely destroyed. The horrors must be got rid of by establishing a public opinion against them at the scene of their enactment, and I presume no one will deny that spreading negro men in Africa with higher ideas drilled into them, is not a bad way to begin. For some years, anything like serious work on the mainland could not be undertaken by the mission, because no natives were trained. But I understand that this is now remedied, and that the mission is ready, if it had the men and the money, to start one or two stations on the mainland. In its own manifestoes the society puts

forward no demand for money, only for men. But I cannot help thinking, in the rough-and-ready way one does think sometimes in the Navy, that if the mission had more money, it would get more men. Some 1,700*l.* a year is not a great deal to come out of all England in the height of her enthusiasm for the East African negro, and I own it puzzles me how those who are so loud in condemnation of what the Arab does for the negro, can content themselves with that denunciation.

In two efforts which it has made to occupy a station on the mainland from Zanzibar, the mission most unhappily lost both its English missionaries. But there is no reason to believe in the inveterate unhealthiness of the spots aimed at in the Usambara country. I imagine, however, that immensely greater and more expensive efforts will be required before a satisfactory permanent station can exist there. A place to live in and food of the proper kind to live on, four or five days' journey inland in Africa, will space cost time, trouble, and money; but if enough of each is spent, the thing may be done.

I have seen the operations of this mission most favourably criticised, and I have also seen a comparative criticism applied to it as making against the system pursued by our own mission. The French mission puts the civilisation most prominently forward, and in the establishment of workshops, steam machinery, the cultivation of music in the negroes—even to the training of an excellent band—it certainly produces in a shorter time, much more visible effects than the opposite system pursued by the Central African Mission. But the

success of such plans hinges on the genius of Roman Catholicism, and the incidence of French law, social and statutory. The French missionaries are not troubled, as ours are, by a surrounding cocoon of sentiment on the subject of slavery. If they see a likely scholar any day in the slave market, they go and buy him, and are not afraid of their countrymen raising a cry against them as slave-dealers. They buy him, they are not troubled about conferring the form of freedom on him, and, as I understand, they never intend to put any artificial notions of freedom into his head, but desire to let those notions come by the natural process of educational development. The aim of their mission is most benevolent. Of its practical good there cannot be the smallest doubt, but it would be almost impossible for Englishmen to attempt a mission on that system, unless legislative sanction were obtained for what would amount to a reversal of our policy respecting slavery.

The genius of Roman Catholicism, which subordinates the lay to the clerical element of any society, permits a discipline in an establishment of cleric and lay brethren such as that at Zanzibar, which would be wanting were it Protestant. The Protestant cleric is only the office-holder of his lay congregation, and, as I have endeavoured to point out in the early part of this chapter, it is inevitable that a Protestant mission society whose main aim is civilisation, but whose head is clerical, should disintegrate.

The French mission, having its head-quarters at Zanzibar is founding a colony on the mainland at Bagamoyo, and is working an estate there with the

ultimate idea of making the colony self-supporting. I have no manner of doubt but that it may do so, and that it may thus become a real centre of civilisation, and will do more absolute good to the negro than many of our larger and more showy schemes of slave trade suppression. But I gather that the only negroes under that mission on whom what we call 'the precious boon of freedom' will be conferred, are either those who will acquire it by the developed force of their character, or those on whom it is thrust contemporaneously with their dismissal from the mission as incorrigible.

I have spoken of some other aims which have grown up in the English Central African Mission side by side with its main object. It must very early have been discovered that all negro children are not capable of development into missionary teachers, and it must then have been a question what to do with these. The surroundings of Zanzibar black society would be sufficient to extinguish many of the advantages of education in the young negro lad turned loose upon it; but short of this, it was, and is, difficult to know how else they can be dealt with. It seems to be now under trial whether the French system of estate cultivation may not be found capable of making this overplus useful, while keeping them out of harm's way. That it can be done, I do not doubt, but I believe there will be most serious difficulties in the way, and I fear those difficulties will be all the more severe under clerical management.

What has to be dealt with is an industrial school of men and women, who according to English law

owe no service to anyone. The mere statement of the case will disclose the difficulty. If any labourer on the estate, brought up under the mission, sees fit at any moment to decline his quota of work, no one can legally compel him to do it. Discipline, therefore, on an English mission estate must either be maintained by the unaided influence of persuasion, or by the application of illegal force.

Everyone who has any experience whatever in the management of men, knows that influence without force in the background is a mere name; and if this is so with Englishmen, it must be trebly so with the negro.

A layman would not find it very difficult to settle a question of this sort in a common sense way. He would overstep the bounds of strict technical legality, because he knows the case he deals with was not contemplated by any English law. He would fall back on his moral rights, and his ultimate objects, and treat all matters before him from that standpoint. But the clergy are tied hand and foot on such occasions: holding before us, as they must, an ideal perfection, they cannot approach a question from its practical side.

What will be wanted, but will be very difficult to obtain, is a public or official recognition that the application of a limited amount of force in the way of discipline, is as necessary for the development of the negro towards freedom, as it is for the maintenance of the comfort and efficiency of a man-of-war.

Under the impulse of such thoughts, I sometimes wish I could see a lay mission, under legislative

sanction and Government inspection, established at Zanzibar or somewhere on the East Coast of Africa. Such a mission should look to be self-supporting, but the gains of the managers should not be measured by the amount of work they could extract from the negro labourer, nor should the latter have any more right to 'strike' than a man-of-war's man. An establishment of this nature would take all the overplus from the Central African Mission, and leave it to prosecute its main scheme of establishing in Central Africa a sound, humane, and religious public opinion. With a notion sufficiently Utopian to offend, I fear, many friends, I may close this chapter.[1]

[1] I have not thought it necessary to go into the details of the mission work. These are to be found in the Society's publications.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE EPISODE OF CHARLIE SABOURRI.

In one of the islands of the Southern Indian Ocean, I met a gentleman whose name I had barely known before, but whose high qualities immediately attracted me, and who became—and I hope continues to be—my friend. Shortly before I put to sea on one occasion, this friend, with something of hesitation in his manner, confided to me the following particulars. He had a negro boy some 14 years of age who had been rescued from slavery by one of H.M.'s ships, and who was under his care. For a negro, this boy was comely and good-looking. My friend had had him taught, so that he spoke and wrote a child's English with facility. Religion had by no means been omitted from his education, and he was surrounded by its happiest influences. He was, so far as any outward judgment could be formed, a Christian—at least in sentiment and knowledge. He was not slow of apprehension, nor deficient in any department of the intellect.

When I saw him first, I beheld a well-grown black boy, handsome for a negro, intelligent-looking, peculiarly soft and attractive in manner; I heard him speak such English as an English child of gentle blood

and of the age of eight years would employ. He spoke it with one of the gentlest voices I remember to have heard.

My friend's difficulty with regard to him was this: recently, from time to time, small, very small articles—ink-bottles, letter-weights, paper-cutters—had mysteriously disappeared. Suspicion rested on Sabourri, which ripened into certainty. He had a habit of pilfering, apparently with the object of making presents to his young companions. My friend had, on the complete discovery of Sabourri's vice, taken such measures with him as a careful, but not weak, parent might have taken; but the treatment did not appear altogether successful. The question was, would I, as a matter of friendship, take the boy for a cruise in my ship, in order to break up his associations, and to try whether the steady discipline of a man-of-war would work a reformation in a character which, except in this one respect, promised well. My friend was very conscious that he asked of me a somewhat dubious favour, and it took me some little time to get over my inclination to say no. Ultimately, remembering that I had the means of preventing any real mischief occurring, should the boy prove incorrigible, and that on the other hand the change might cure him, I consented that I would take him, but upon the condition that my friend was to accept him back again whenever I should wish it.

The time arrived for our departure, and Sabourri came on board. I called him into my cabin and gave him just such a lecture as I would have given any of the younger boys belonging to the ship. I told him

I was aware of his proclivities; that he was wholly in my power, and that I would not hesitate to take the severest measures with him if he made no effort to reform, but that if I saw a change for the better, I would be his firm friend, and that he would lead a happy life on board. Sabourri shook his head gently and said:

'I know I been a very naughty boy, but be better —better.'

It was difficult to hear him, with his plaintive voice and baby diction, without feeling a foolish stir within one—I own to feeling it, and to a tendency to pat the boy on the head. I stopped short of that, however, as a matter of discipline, but I told him he should, for the present, act in personal attendance on me, and so dismissed him.

The duties incident to leaving port next day did not permit me to think very much of Sabourri, but when things had settled down at sea, and the usual afternoon sea dinner-time arrived, I noticed his absence from my cabin and asked the reason.

'Sabourri is sea-sick, Sir; he's been werry sick ever since we come to sea.'

'Oh!' I observed, 'is that it? he'll soon get over that. However I will see him after dinner.'

Some little time later I went, and found him lying on the deck of my steward's store-room, evidently very sick indeed—quite exhausted. He was just able to look up at me with his wistful eyes, and *to shuffle away out of sight a part of a stolen water melon.*

In the evening, as he did not seem to get over it,

we had the doctor to him, who recommended a hammock under the top-gallant forecastle, and an attendant, as the illness was not mere sea-sickness, but had something to do with—probably the stolen water melon. An attendant was accordingly told off for Sabourri, who watched him with that tenderness and care which seems to me only to be found in women and blue-jackets. But Sabourri, instead of getting better, began to grow worse. If he had any thoughts, he lost the power of expressing them; he dwindled to a shadow, and we thought he would die. The surgeon had looked grave when he spoke of the case, but had not told me distinctly what his thoughts were. I had my own.

Next evening the surgeon was called away from my table to see a sick man. I was alone when he returned, and he told me that Jameson—Sabourri's attendant—was in a state of collapse from cholera. There was no need of explanation between us. We had both known for many hours that Sabourri was apparently dying from the same malady. Unhappily the blue-jackets, Jameson's companions, had seen in his early sufferings only such ailments as are not unfrequent in the tropics —violent diarrhœa and succeeding weakness. They had not thought it necessary to send for medical advice, until too late to be available. The surgeon feared the worst, and poor Jameson died at eight o'clock next morning. It was not prudent to point any suspicions which either officers or men might have had, so nothing was said as to the fears which the surgeon and I entertained of the spread of the disease in the ship;

but we laid our plans ready to be put into execution the instant a third case appeared, and that precautionary separation of Sabourri which we had previously adopted, was rendered more strict. Happily our fears were not justified. No further case occurred, and Sabourri, slung in a cool hammock under an awning, and attended by a nurse of his own colour, one of the Kroomen, began to mend.

He now came in for the occasional visits which it is the duty of the captain of a man-of-war to pay to his invalid crew. I used to look in on him once or twice a day. He was terribly shrunken and feeble—his voice was inaudible, though his lips could be seen to move; yet whenever he was awake and I approached him, he would slowly stretch out his skeleton arms, and taking my not unwilling hand between his own, would motion it toward his heart. Did we under such circumstances remember either the evil we had been told of him, or the water melon? I fear not.

Sabourri mended apace: he was soon out of danger, and before many days the surgeon pronounced him fit for work; he accordingly came back to his attendance upon me. Neither his manner nor his words failed to express gratitude for the care which had been taken of him, and all went well till our arrival at the next port. Then there came a report to me that one of the seamen's locked 'ditty boxes' had been broken open, that all his money, and some other property capable of identification, had been stolen therefrom. My suspicions immediately turned to Sabourri, and were confirmed by the statement made

by a witness that he had been seen to purchase fruit from a boat alongside. He and his box were searched, and the greater part of the missing money and all the property, were found either about his person or in his box.

The question now was, what was to be done with him? Had he been one of the ship's boys, the birch would have been judiciously and legally applied: if without due effect, a court-martial would have legally improved him out of the service, possibly to swell the criminal ranks at home, perhaps to reform and become a useful citizen. But the birch had been tried on Sabourri before, and general belief declares that it has small effect upon the negro unless carried to an excess not to be thought of. To turn him ashore was to send him back to certain barbarism, besides being an illegal process. The freed slave is neither a slave nor a free man; somebody is supposed to be responsible for him for a term of years; it is illegal to do most things with him in the way of punishment: it is legal to do very little. The easiest of all processes, to let him go about his business, while it is what the freed slave, like any other ignorant child, most ardently desires, is, first, nominally illegal, and secondly, strongly opposed to English sentiment, and liable at any moment to call down the wrath of public opinion on him who so acts.

For Sabourri, I could only think of starvation and confinement. I placed him under charge on a certain part of the deck and cut off his supplies of food. I cannot say I was any longer interested in him; but I

hoped that the very powerful discipline of an empty stomach might possibly turn him from his evil way. After a few weeks of this treatment, he was once more released and placed to work under my servants. He did not lose a moment in appropriating several silver spoons, some small pictures, and a miscellaneous collection of useful articles, which he packed up ready for convenient removal. There were too many sharp eyes on him to allow of his enjoying the feeling of proprietorship long; he was promptly paraded before me with his illegally acquired effects.

I had often heard of kleptomania, but I had never seen a kleptomaniac in the flesh until now. There was of course no use in pursuing any remedial measures in such a case. All I could do was to prevent mischief by strict seclusion of the patient, and—weak acknowledgment of being baffled—return him as soon as I could to the friend who was more responsible for the boy than I was. I cast about for a long time, in seeking means of safe transmission to the southern island where my friend resided. I could not take a casual passage for him in native vessels—the chances were in such a case that he would either sell himself, or be sold on the way, and would never reach the philanthropic hands of my friend. At length—my ship being suddenly ordered away—I had to close with the offer of a native merchant of probity, whom I knew well, to undertake the safe conduct of the boy from the port where we lay to that where my friend resided. I warned my native acquaintance of the state of the case, and so he did not come off a loser

by the transaction; but Sabourri had been only a few hours under his care, when he broke open all the drawers and cupboards he could get at in this merchant's house, in search of removable valuables. Finding none, he decamped, and cut off all connexion with himself by plunging into the polyglot crowd which throng the back slums of an Indian city. Some search was made for him, but on the retirement of the ship from that port, it naturally ceased, and is never likely to be renewed.

Such is the episode of Charlie Sabourri, which, however trivial it may appear to the reader, has left its mark on the mind of the writer. The moral he draws from it must be gathered from the general tone of this book.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SUPPRESSION OF THE EAST AFRICAN EXPORT SLAVE TRADE.

As I was able at the beginning of my 'experiences' to set out in order the nature and issues of the Northern export slave trade, and later that of the South to Madagascar, so the time has now come when I may usefully bring together and discuss the various methods by which those trades can be checked or suppressed, so far as the carriage of slaves beyond sea is concerned.

There are, it is evident, only three methods by which the trade can be operated on directly—namely, by the force of treaty obligations at the ultimate market, at the ports of import: by the same force at the ports of export; and by the forcible interception of the trade midway.

On the West Coast these three measures were employed *pari passu*; but the middle course, that of treaty action on the ports of export, occupied a very subordinate position. Many of the chief outlets for slaves were in the hands of savage tribes, on whom the obligations of a treaty sat with extreme lightness, and to whom the term 'moral force' conveyed no very

clear meaning. Treaties with such powers merely gave a sort of legal sanction to the hostile operations of our squadrons, and enabled us to employ war measures without going through the formality of a declaration of war. In some cases these measures—as at Lagos—ultimately resulted in the capture of the port of export and its annexation to British territory.

Where the ports of export were in the hands of civilised nations, whose administration was nominally conducted on the principles of European law, these treaty obligations could not be enforced by anything stronger than diplomatic representation. It is patent to all who choose even to glance at the question, that diplomatic representation had not that immediate effect which it is understood to have in purely European politics. The fact was that the home Governments did not possess sufficient power over their distant settlements to enforce a complete obedience to decrees which were on the whole wrung from them by the action of the English Government. Then the local Governments of these settlements were often equally powerless, and more unwilling to deal with a question which was extremely troublesome, and interfered greatly with their general scheme of rule. Occasionally, no doubt, private financial considerations operated on the baser natures which were found in command at out-stations, and caused an encouragement rather than a suppression of a trade which their lack of education prevented them from feeling the injustice of. But when so many other patent causes acted to produce a lax application of the law, we need not go

beyond them for reasons why treaty obligations, even at the civilised ports of export, were generally futile; and required, almost equally with uncivilised ports, the guard of an outlying English man-of-war.

It was altogether different with treaty obligations at ports of import. The moment a State decided against the import of African slaves into its territory, the trade fell like an ox struck by the pole-axe.[1] The demand ceased, and with it the export, until new markets could be found. The Governments of Brazil and of Cuba, in making the import of slaves a crime, rendered the safe possession of a slave a matter of such doubt that they abolished the export from Africa in a way which no blockade that we could establish had been able to do.

If with these experiences in our minds we turn to the East African slave trade, it will be convenient to review what has been done already by treaty, and what it is probable we shall further effect in that way.

It is very strange to me how even the best authorities misapprehend the nature of our present slave-trade engagements with Zanzibar. I have heard the treaty of 1845–7 denounced as though it were in some sort a co-partnership on our part in slave-trading. Even such well-informed persons as residents at Zanzibar have been found to say that until 'formally released from their share of those obligations, voluntarily and freely undertaken, the British Government cannot, without a direct and gross breach of faith,' go beyond them.[2]

[1] Parl. Rep., 1865. The import of slaves into Brazil fell from 60,000 to nothing in five years, from 1848 to 1853.

[2] 'E. African Slave Trade,' p. 11.

The simple fact, however, is that Great Britain has not 'undertaken' anything whatever. Syud Said engaged to prohibit the 'export of slaves from his African dominions.' He further engaged to 'use his utmost influence with all the chiefs of Arabia, the Red Sea, and the Persian Gulf' to prevent the importation of slaves into their dominions. Lastly, he granted power to British men-of-war to seize any of his ships which might be found carrying slaves beyond his African dominions. England has not hitherto made one single sacrifice in return, yet we are told 'the principal abettors of the trade have been the rulers of Muscat and Zanzibar.'[1]

The late Sultan of Zanzibar further engaged, and this time on his own part entirely, without asking us for even the formality of a signature as witness, to permit us to seize within the already shrunken limits of the legal slave-trade waters, any vessels which might be found carrying slaves at a certain period of the year.

We have therefore no 'treaty,' properly so called, with Zanzibar in relation to the slave trade. I even suppose an English law court would decide against the validity of an agreement where there was no 'consideration' given by Great Britain for the very great concessions made by Zanzibar.[2]

[1] The Slave Trade of E. Africa, C. M. Soc., 1869.

[2] There is a curious expression in the Report of the last Parliamentary Committee—that of 1871—on the East African slave trade, where it is recommended that our Government should state to the Sultan of Zanzibar that 'unless further securities can be obtained for the entire prohibition of the foreign slave trade, it will feel itself compelled to *abrogate the treaty*,' &c. If the treaty relating to the slave trade be meant, its abrogation would amount to depriving our Consul at Zanzibar of the power to condemn any

South of Zanzibar territory we have the usual and old treaty with Portugal, whereby the 'infamous and piratical practice of transporting the natives of Africa beyond sea, for the purpose of consigning them to slavery, is, and shall for ever continue to be, a strictly prohibited and highly penal crime, in every part of their respective dominions.'[1] We know that this treaty is not sufficient to check in any material degree the export of slaves from territory nominally Portuguese, to the only markets now open, namely, Madagascar and the Comoro Islands.

In like manner, we know, or believe, that the very large concessions made by the rulers of Zanzibar towards the stoppage of the Northern slave trade have had no noticeable effect on it, and that practically the supply goes North just as it always has done.

It is not too much to say that in East Africa, as in West, the main result of treaties or concessions at the ports of export for slaves has been no more than to legalise the acts of war carried out by our cruisers.

Turning next to our treaty arrangements with the ports of import in the East, we may observe of them that if we have attempted it, we have not yet succeeded in touching there the status of slavery. We

Muscat or Zanzibar vessel carrying on the slave trade. He holds such powers entirely by concession of the Sultan, and were the concession withdrawn, or thrown up by England, a claim for compensation would lie against any naval officer capturing a Zanzibar slaver. I would presume the expression has no reference to slave trade treaties but for the word 'abrogation.' A commercial treaty, not now in force, might be enforced as a means of pressure; this would not be 'abrogation,' but the reverse.

[1] See the treaty of 1842.

have treaties with many of the Arabian ports of import, enabling us to seize slaves on the water, but exactly the same difficulty which existed in Cuba is found to exist there. As soon as a slave is landed he is legally secure from our pursuit, nor can we call on the Government, such as it is, to deliver up recently landed slaves. With Persia, as I have shown in my third chapter, our treaty arrangements as to slave-trade suppression are purely nominal.

On the other hand, our treaties with the Southern ports of import, those of Madagascar, are such as to alter the status of the newly-imported slave altogether, and we have seen their action in the release of these smuggled goods.

A very clear distinction consequently exists between legal enactments at the port of import, which authorise any and every measure for preventing the landing of slaves, and those which touch him after he has landed. The one may check the landing of slaves, but may, by increasing the price offered in the blockaded market, increase the attempted landing, and therefore really increase the export, or attempted export. This was very marked in the case of Cuba, where the rise in price was enormous, running up to as much as 210*l.* per slave, and of course directly encouraging the slave trader. In Madagascar, although we have no direct evidence of a fall in price, we have none of a rise, and it is almost certain that the actual fall must come, not because the slave is less valuable, but because the security is worse.

If, however, by means of difficulties directly placed

in the way of his import, the price of the slave can be so run up that the consumers of his labour begin to look elsewhere for the supply of their wants, the old trade may languish and die. I suppose it might be laid down that the less the slave is worked in any country employing that labour, the more easy it will be to kill the trade thither. The less it is the habit to work him, the smaller is his money value, and the sooner a price is reached which the buyer of slaves is unwilling to give. I should suppose this is peculiarly the case with the East African slave trade. If we could only run up the price of slave labour in Arabia and Persia sufficiently high to prevent the Arab or the Persian paying it, we should begin to check the trade. But while on one side the prohibitory price would be reached in Asia at a very much lower figure than in the western hemisphere, it must be remembered on the other that we start from a much lower level. A slave in Cuba was supposed worth 60*l.* to 70*l.* in 1848 and ran up by estimate as high as 210*l.* in 1865.[1] As no good authority has yet put the price of a negro slave in southern Asia higher than 20*l.* to 25*l.*, there would be but a blank prospect before us were it not for the consideration that the Asiatic slave can never reach the Cuban maximum in productive value.

On this reasoning it will clearly appear that, supposing it possible, the shortest and most direct method of abolishing the East African slave trade by sea is to act upon Persia, Arabia, Turkey, and Zanzibar as we have acted on Madagascar, and to induce those

[1] Parl. Rep., African W. Coast, 1865, p. 109.

territories to make the newly-imported slave stolen property.

If, however, my Persian Gulf experiences have conveyed to the reader's mind any such ideas as they conveyed to my own, the notion of attacking the status of slavery in those countries must be abandoned as soon as formed. The task is beyond our power. We might use as much 'waste paper' as we thought proper, but the ultimate result would still be only to give a legal sanction to those acts of war which our cruisers have power to undertake. When, therefore, H.M.'s ships have all the licence they require at and about the Arabian, Persian, and Turkish ports, it would seem that we have done all we possibly can by treaty at the ultimate markets.

As regards Arabia, I think we either have, or can take all necessary powers, because of the weakness of those who would oppose us; but at Persian ports our powers might well bear enlarging. Here, however, we meet a worse difficulty. The moment we come to a slave-trading question with Persia we find ourselves forced to join with that question the safety of our Empire in the East, against the possible advance of a rival European power. The security of the millions of our Indian subjects cannot be imperilled for the sake of a few thousand negroes, who are not themselves capable of appreciating the benefits we propose to confer upon them.

The greater responsibility which devolves on us, of maintaining our rule in India, makes it necessary that we should not raise unpleasant questions at the Persian

Court; and if anything is ever done there in the way of pressure, it must be too gradual and too gentle to be classed under the direct means of suppressing the trade in blacks.

Of Turkey I shall say nothing. In my 'experiences' I did not meet her in connexion with the slave trade, and the question is so mixed up with European politics that to discuss it would open too wide a field.

There remain Zanzibar Islands, considered as ports of import. The only thing now touching them under this aspect is the Sultan's decree before mentioned, which closes—effectually, according to all evidence—those ports during four months of the year.

Between the Arab power in the Persian Gulf, and Arab power in the islands of Zanzibar, in their relations to us, there is just the difference of their geographical character. We cannot surround the one, and we can surround the other, with our fleets. The continental chiefs are completely out of our power upon land, the Zanzibar chief is completely in it. If we sent *an order* to the present Sultan by the next mail, and backed it with sufficient force, to abolish all import of slaves from the mainland into the islands, those who are best informed believe that it would be done. There might be a revolution—some bloodshed, but not more than we have made acquaintance with in the Gulf. There would probably be no revolution if two or three of our cruisers lay in the harbour and issued *orders* that it was not to be. The whole thing is, as a matter of fact, in our hands to deal with as we please.

But setting aside other considerations for the present,

what kind of justice would there be in such a proceeding? If the ruler alone were considered, it might be said that he owes his throne to us already, and that he has connived at breaches of his predecessor's agreements with us. But the blow would not fall so heavily on the ruler as on the Arab owners of the soil of the island. Estates would fall to ruin for lack of labour, and the sudden stoppage of that now annually imported would drag the Arab down, and leave the island a wilderness.

It was not thought just to our own West India Islands to reduce them to this state without compensating the owners of the labour taken from them by force. It would be still less so to leave the Arab, who sees no harm in slavery, uncompensated. But I suppose no one would be bold enough to propose that the British taxpayer should be called upon to pay for the privilege of forcing his views of slavery on the Arab.

There is another aspect in which this part of the question may be viewed. If the Arab finds himself either suddenly or gradually deprived of the negro service to which he is accustomed, he will be found casting about for the means of replacing it, and those means are very close at hand in Zanzibar. Many of the leading landowners now own estates on the mainland: the Sultan himself has a residence prepared there. A general migration of the Arabs to the security of the continent only twenty miles off, might be predicted with something like certainty, and Zanzibar, Pemba, and Momfia would be abandoned to their negro populations, or to any civilised nation which chose to take

them in hand.[1] If Germany were not prepared to do this, or if England objected to her doing it, it would seem the latter must be prepared to do it herself, and this has appeared to me the goal towards which our anti-slave trade policy in East Africa is inevitably tending. In the chapter on Zanzibar I have endeavoured to show that totally different circumstances were leading up to the same point, but that we had been able by artificial means to stop it for the present. It is now hoped, I suppose, that Sir Bartle Frere's mission will result in some arrangement which will preserve to the Arab landowner in Zanzibar Island a sufficient supply of labour to prevent his abandoning his estates, but will prohibit any overflow towards the north.

In other words, I suppose that no attempt will be made to deal with Zanzibar Island as a consumer, but only as an exporter of slaves; that no treaty will be proposed similar to that with Madagascar, and that the status of the slave in Zanzibar will not be touched. We are—if my supposition be true—about to use at Zanzibar, with great hopes of success, the method hitherto found to be *least* valuable in the suppression of the slave trade by sea.

I am not saying that any better plans are open to us by means of treaty engagements. I question whether there are, but what seems certain is, that supposing the present mission succeeds in arranging that only one

[1] Col. Pelly, in 1862, mentions the case of an Arab gentleman at Zanzibar, one of the most advanced and intelligent in the island, positively refusing to buy land there on the ground that presently the English policy in slave trade matters would deprive it of all value.

port on the mainland—Dar es Salam is proposed—shall be the only legal place of export from the mainland, and that the numbers exported thence shall be limited to 4,000 yearly, then the general result will be no more than to leave our squadrons rather more free to adopt the third method of slave trade suppression, mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, namely, its forcible interruption at sea.

To the consideration of this method we must now come.

It can never be too strongly pointed out that the East Coast Northern slave trade is quite a different trade from that formerly existing from West Africa. It flows side by side with lawful commerce from the very centre of Africa to its ultimate market. The Arab traders come down yearly from the North, bringing carpets, cloth, fish, dates, &c., to the value of 80,000 dollars, and they go back with rice, grain, arms, cocoa-nuts, and slaves. The same vessel will carry a ground tier of cocoa-nuts, and an upper tier of slaves. Wherever the slave trader is found lurking about for a cargo, there also is his legal brother. A dhow at anchor in a creek may be waiting for a cargo of ivory, which fails, and she may ship a cargo of slaves instead. She may always ship, if she be not prevented, a few slaves as a part of an otherwise legitimate cargo. Hence the great obstacle in the way of forcibly suppressing the trade by sea is the difficulty of separating the legal from the illegal trade. On the one hand, if the naval officer is fettered in his operations by questions of possible injustice to a

legal trader, he will certainly be fettered in dealing justice to the illegal slaver.

It is on these grounds that every naval officer who has any experience in East African waters must deprecate much of the most recent instructions issued for his guidance, especially that part which practically limits his captures to cases where 'slaves are found crowded and chained together;' for he knows that the very moment it is observed by the Arab that it is *number* which makes the cargo of slaves unsafe, he will carry something under that number in every vessel. I have already said that this will be a great advantage for the slave, but, as it will not touch the slave trade, it might be as well to give the slave such an advantage by more direct means.

But, whatever becomes of existing instructions, so soon as the new treaty with Zanzibar is ratified[1]—assuming that it will be—new instructions must be issued to the naval officer. It will be necessary that every dhow legally carrying slaves by sea in the vicinity of the Zanzibar dominions shall have a pass in English for the number she is entitled to carry, and their port of export and import. It is not to be supposed that the transference of slaves from island to island, or from port to port on the mainland of old slaves, will cease; and the naval officer must have some definite evidence, such as a pass in English would give him, to stay his hand in the case of a legitimate dhow, or he will

[1] Since these sheets have passed through the press, letters from Zanzibar report the rejection of a treaty by the Sultan. I am in ignorance of its nature.

waste his time in towing possibly illegal dhows to some place where they can be adjudicated on; otherwise he must deal out those injustices which have been so much complained of; or he must let the illegal slave trade go on unchecked.

But supposing it is more clearly laid down for him than it has yet been, what he is to capture and what to let go free, there remains the great question, how best to dispose of his forces; and here, I must confess, all does not seem so clear as it might appear on a cursory view. It has been, and it will be, assumed that the opening of the remaining eight months of the year to the operation of British cruisers in Zanzibar waters, and the necessary arrangement of passes which must follow it, will put a check upon the original shipment of slaves to the North. I cannot avoid thinking that after all it will not make much difference.

At present we know that most of the slaves pass through Zanzibar Island for the North. Under the assumed arrangements this will no doubt cease, yet its cessation may not mean more than a change of venue. There is possibly nowhere a line of coast 700 miles long which possesses more ports and anchorages suitable for dhows than that from Cape Delgado to the Juba River. I do not know what power there is to prevent the Arab slave traders from shipping a cargo of slaves at any convenient spot along this line of coast, nor do I see how it is to be blockaded except by a very large squadron, and even then there must be immense interference with the legal trade.

I am supposing that it is in the minds of those who

advocate the measure adverted to, either that it will, by force of the Sultan's government, keep the export trade entirely at Dar es Salam or some other port, and confine it solely to Zanzibar Islands, or else will enable such a disposition of the English squadron to be made as may produce the same effect. I fear the Sultan's power will be found unequal to the task, and I am now inclined to fear that no fresh disposition of the squadron can be made which will effect the object.

We will suppose that, the limits of the legal slave trade being abolished, the squadron—five or six ships—is drawn within them. The immediate result would be for the Arabs to march their intended cargoes of slaves, with—as I understand it—much greater suffering than the sea voyage entails, to those many convenient spots in the Juba Islands, already mentioned,[1] and there ship their cargoes in peace and security.[2] I have no means of knowing whether it is probable the route of the caravans from the interior might diverge, so that the ivory and legal slaves should go to Southern ports, and the illegal slaves to Northern ports direct; but I should suppose it possible. A great deal of slave traffic along the coast would also go on in boats small enough to escape observation, so that the removal of the squadron to waters not hitherto occupied, though it might partially check the trade while the new

[1] See Chap. XVII.

[2] Mr. Churchill believed, in 1868, that from 1,000 to 1,200 already went up thus. Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 71. Dr. Kirk, writing in 1871, believed that all the difficulties of the land route from Lamoo to the Juba Islands were removed.

arrangements were in preparation, would not, I believe, have a permanent effect.

But if so, it follows that not much can result from the hypothetical treaty mentioned. The only use of such treaties, it has been abundantly shown, is to give the naval force increased powers; yet practically these are left as before, if they cannot be efficiently exercised within the present forbidden limits of time and place.

On the other hand, reverting now to the forcible suppression by sea under existing treaties, and assuming the futility of new ones, I think there is reason to believe that a different method of proceeding from that hitherto adopted by the squadron might succeed in effecting captures so large as to raise the price of the slave in Southern Asia above what ordinary means can afford, and so force the populations to do without him.

Presuming that naval force sufficient is at liberty to devote itself entirely to suppressing the two slave trades, the disposition of this force in the most effective manner involves the double questions of time and place.

The Southern or Madagascar trade, being the smaller and simpler, may be dealt with in the first instance and in fewer words. As it is established that newly-imported slaves cannot be legally held by any native of Madagascar, it follows that ships stationed on that coast may intercept the slave ship on her way to market, or may demand, either directly or through the proper agent, the surrender of the cargo after it has been landed. The place, therefore, for our cruisers would be the Madagascar coast, where their powers

are greatest—not the Mozambique coast, where they are least. No special point could be assigned where the illegal trade can be dealt with as we dealt with it at Ras Madraka. It does not pursue any single narrow path, and though possibly its greatest concentration takes place about Cape St. Andrew, a force concentrated there might be easily evaded to the North or to the South. Cruisers must, therefore, trust to making themselves ubiquitous on the coast of Madagascar, and may perhaps do more good by obtaining information as to cargoes of slaves already landed, than by intercepting them midway.

The time at which they must act, seems, according to our present information, to be all the year round.

For the interception of Northern trade, the time seems to be indicated by the dates of previous captures, which I have noted on the chart, and the known conditions of wind and current. Until the beginning of April there appears to be practically no Northern trade, and even off Juba a force would be idle until that date. On the Arabian coast the middle of April would be sufficiently early to spread the net. The time for the withdrawal of the force placed anywhere on the North slave-trader's beat would be regulated by the possibility of maintaining it there; but it is clear it should never quit its station, unless compelled, before the beginning of June. How early, after the violent season of the monsoon is past, positions on the Northern route should be again taken up, might also be answered by the reply, 'as early as possible;' but it clearly should not be later at the Southern end of the

route than the 1st of September, and the blockade should be maintained until the middle of November in the South, or perhaps the middle of October on the Arabian coast.

Coming now to the places to be chosen, I am disposed to think that generally the Arabian coast is most suited for occupation in the ante-monsoon season, and the African coast in the post-monsoon season: the former for its convenience, and the latter so as to lie across the Red Sea traffic.

I think also that it is preferable to concentrate the squadron, or at least two or three ships, at a varying point on the narrow belt of water occupied by the traders of all classes in going North. Hitherto, the plan of independent action most productive has been that described in my ninth chapter; but my own experience of that plan is, that I missed a great many possible slavers from want of power to chase everything. It seemed to me then, and it has recurred with increased force to my mind since I have had the opportunity of taking in a wider field of observation, that if a squadron had been concentrated at Ras Madraka, nothing whatever could have passed unsearched; and moreover, a squadron might have maintained its position there much longer than a single ship could; for the coal of all the ships would have been the store drawn upon, and day by day only the coal of one or two ships would have been used. A landing party ready to proceed a few miles west of the anchorage, very easily arranged for in the squadron, or even a couple of steam launches, would be a pre-

ventive of dhows escaping to the shore, as ours did; and thus it appears that until the violence of the monsoon made the position untenable, it could be maintained. It would be necessary to provide for the interception of vessels passing in the dark; but that could easily be done by detaching one or two ships to sea the last thing at night, so as to drift up with any passing vessels till daylight disclosed their presence.

It would probably not answer to occupy the same point two years running; and it might often be well to take up positions in the open bays of the Arabian coast, steaming slowly west all day, and falling back to the eastward all night. Of the positions suited to such a lying-in-wait, Ras-el-Hadd should not be neglected. Though a single ship must endure the chagrin of seeing cargo after cargo of slaves landed on the beaches there, under the very eyes of her commander, and close to their market, it would probably be quite possible, with several ships, and by means of steam launches thrown out to the west, to cut off vessels approaching the shore.

Passing to the African coast, Cape Guardafui and Ras Hafoon would be found, as hitherto, spots well suited for spreading the wide net of a squadron.

If one of the cleverest interpreters and greatest rascals with whom the slave trapper in the Indian Ocean has yet had to do, is to be credited, Arab captains of dhows have a strong objection to run their vessels on shore anywhere on the African coast north of Magadoxo (or Mugdeesha, as it is now more commonly

spelled), as the Somali tribes are there too much for them. But we know that slavers have run on shore and landed their slaves at Cape Guardafui; so that the fear, if it exist, is not always great enough to prevent their taking the usual course. A squadron, therefore, must be prepared on the coast of Africa, as elsewhere, to cut off from the shore, by an advanced guard of boats, the illegal traders sighting it. So provided, positions may be taken up anywhere as far south as Juba. Below this we come to something like an inshore passage, or the Northern passage may be effected by land, so that the net spread by the squadron would be evaded. Besides this, it must be supposed that information of the whereabouts of the squadron would be conveyed from about Juba to Lamoo and other Southern ports by land, and the wary slave-trader would slip by out of sight of land, making it again when sufficiently far North for safety.

The naval reader will be aware that this method of working in squadrons would involve some knotty points of prize money; but no doubt such could be arranged on a just basis.

As regards the question of bounties payable to the captors at present, it has been suggested that the system is antiquated, and that it would be better to substitute increased pay to those engaged in slave trade suppression. This might be pleasanter for Her Majesty's servants, but, as it has been well observed, our object is the suppression of the export trade in slaves, not the convenience of those engaged in the duty, and although, as I before observed, very few officers

would choose a slave trade suppressor's office for the purpose of making money out of it, there can, I think, be no doubt that, just as a small stake is necessary for the interest of a game of whist, the officer is all the better and keener worker for the little gain attaching to success.

In a former chapter I raised the question, or rather pointed out that it was raised, as to the method of calculating the tonnage bounties, and I have now to say that I think it would be well if these bounties were paid on the length of the vessel, or some simple measurement of that kind. As the build differs so little in different types of dhow, almost any distinct measurement would be sufficient, and would avoid some unseemly recriminations which now occasionally take place.

I am fully of opinion that none of Her Majesty's naval servants are too highly remunerated for the work of slave trade suppression. It really involves all the privations and many of the dangers of actual warfare, but it seldom brings with it any of the glories of that condition.

I suppose it is hardly within the experience of any naval suppressor—except where there has been a fight—to have received the commendation of his Government for activity, but it is certainly common to receive more or less blame from the Foreign Minister for the time being. The thing is inevitable, but should be accounted for in the bill.

The naval officer's time might be economised, and his efficiency materially increased as a slave catcher, if

he were provided with something in the nature of a handbook to the East African slave trade. Such a work might, without much difficulty, be compiled by anyone having access to the necessary documents, and might be periodically corrected as information grew. I am not without hopes that even the small contribution offered in this work may help some recently appointed brother officer over at least his early puzzles in suppressing the slave trade.

There is one measure which I believe that most naval officers, and most civilians acquainted with the slave trade, would consider capable of producing the most direct effect of all on it; yet it seems hopeless in the present state of public opinion in England.

When we began to occupy ourselves with suppressing the West African slave trade, it seems to have been concluded that there was no more direct way of doing so than by extending British territory there. To quote the Colonial Minister of a late day, speaking of West Coast Settlements, 'what has been intended has been to encourage, by the occupation of detached posts, the legitimate commerce of British merchants, not only for its own sake, but with the object of providing for the more effectual suppression of the slave trade and other inhuman practices, unhappily too common among the native tribes.'

The question for us is whether a policy deliberately adopted for the West Coast, and certainly conducive to the objects in view, should be as deliberately repudiated for the East Coast. I am not speaking now of Zanzibar, and the indirect action we might take by

facilitating the absorption of the land by British subjects; but I mean that by occupying territory, with precisely the same views as we occupied it on the West Coast, we might check the slave trade as cheaply and more permanently than we can by mere squadrons of cruisers. I think that such a station might be found in some of the Juba Islands or the adjacent mainland. It would be directly in the main track of the slave trade, would become a centre of operations for our cruisers, and might maintain even a coaling station and Vice-Admiralty Court, if it were not also, as Dr. Kirk suggests, the commencement of a liberated African colony.

It would be necessary to select a spot with moderately secure anchorage, and easily defensible. A healthy climate is of course the main element in such a locality. It may, I think, be supposed that the Juba Islands, always swept by fresh breezes and changing currents, would be as healthy as any other localities on the African Coast, and, speaking very roughly from a passing review of the Islands, it does not seem impossible that we might find all that was necessary at Port Durnford, Thoala Island, or even Juba.

I have thus drawn a sketch of what appears to me the choice before us in the East, in following up our old policy of exterminating the sea slave trade by direct means. What we have done or can do in an indirect way will form one of the subjects discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ENGLAND AND AFRICA.

I HAVE spoken in a previous chapter of the way in which the voyager in the Indian Ocean is thrust back on first principles, and forced, even against his will, to think out questions which would never cross his path in more artificial regions. If smaller questions thus press themselves forward, how weightily must larger ones urge the mind of the observer in one or other direction?

I found it impossible during my sojourn in the waters of the Indian Ocean to avoid passing in mental review those great questions of policy whence sprang the duties entrusted to me. While pursuing and damaging to the utmost of my power the luckless slave trader, as an immediate end, I could not avoid perpetually looking beyond him, and considering whether such pursuit and damage were worthy to be classed among England's great works; or whether it really was that eccentric, inexplicable procedure which to some of the Arabs whom I met it seemed to be.

So compelled, by the contact of the facts, to view a question in a somewhat broader light than I had done before personal observation was unexpectedly forced

upon me, I came to think of what I saw, not as one cause, but as many effects.

I saw slavery, a slave trade, an export slave trade, backward civilisation, backward morality. I heard of many horrors, and I saw some. I heard of ravage, devastation, carnage, violence and strife: a general progress downwards, if in any direction; and, out of all the effects I saw and heard of, I noticed that most witnesses at a distance and some on the spot selected two—'slavery,' and the 'slave trade'—and, conferring on them the office of causes, cast in their teeth the blame of all the other evils.

I saw enough in a few weeks, almost in a few days, to make me doubt, as many before me have doubted, whether the choice was sound. More thought and more research—though neither can be called deep or wide—increased my doubts, and set me wondering how it would be if England left off thinking about the slave, and began to think about the negro.

Slavery! what is there in these syllables to heat us as they do? If I ask the question, the answer—even in my own mind—is ready. What is there *not*—of evil? What is there not indeed, if slavery be a cause? but if it be only an effect, a symptom, our heat against it will turn to more useful energy elsewhere.

For years I never heard the word 'slave' uttered without forming a mental picture of a very black negro, with a peculiarly gentle upturned face, standing hoe in hand in a grove of sugar canes, and humbly receiving vigorous castigation at the hands of his driver. No doubt the association was derived from some nursery

picture which was the powerful exponent of English thought on the question in times gone by; but it has been breached, if not broken, by a personal experience, which defied me to detect a slave from a free man.

Hear what a great writer says upon slavery. 'It is by a strange confusion of ideas that slave property (as it is termed) is counted at so much per head in an estimate of the wealth, or of the capital of the country which tolerates the existence of such property.' 'More need not be said here on a cause so completely judged and decided as that of slavery.'[1]

How well Dickens understood the power of the word he dealt with when he drew the masterly sketch of Mark Tapley and the freed slave whom he had 'engaged to sit along with him and make him jolly'! How naturally it seemed to follow that the freed slave had been, when young, 'shot in the leg, gashed in the arm, scored in his live limbs like crimped fish, beaten out of shape, had his neck galled with an iron collar, and wore iron rings upon his wrists and ankles'!

Yet of slavery, as responsible for them, none of these pictures are true.

The nursery woodcut told a tale of intense toil only to be drawn from the negro in process of being worked to death by the whip and the torture. It never presupposed or helped anyone to believe that the cultivation of the sugar cane was a process which does not involve great toil. The negroes freed by our force, and apprenticed by the same power at Mauritius, do not, it is to

[1] Mill, 'Pol. Econ.'

be supposed, require the whip to undergo a labour condemned for its very lightness.[1]

The whole of the labour of Madagascar, most of that of Arabia and Persia, is slave labour. Zanzibar supports a commerce of a million chiefly on slave labour. Nay, the vast majority of the products of Africa come to us as the accumulated wealth of the slave labourer. Granting that, were other labour at work, slave labour is better away, how can it be said that, the labour being the only agency at work, it is less part of the wealth of those countries than any other labour would be?

Where the mind of Dickens was straying when he drew his picture, may be gathered from his 'American Notes.' He visited a tobacco manufactory in the Southern States, and saw the slaves at work. His thought was 'they were all labouring quietly *then*,'—not in the chronic state of outbreak, in his opinion, usual. He wished afterwards to see the negroes at their meals. Their owner appeared to Dickens 'to be suddenly taken rather deaf.' He (Dickens) was not invited to enter any of their huts. All he 'saw of them was that they were crazy, wretched cabins, near to which groups of half-naked children basked in the sun, or wallowed on the dusty ground.' In the writer's mind was the foregone conclusion that he would not be invited here or there because he would witness things—consequences of slavery—desirable to be hidden. The 'crazy, wretched cabins,' the 'half-nakedness,' the 'basking,'

[1] Bp. Ryan, 'Mauritius.'

and 'wallowing,' were clearly consequences. He never seems to suspect that the 'kind-hearted, worthy' master would have been very sorry indeed to have subjected his kind-heartedness to the public criticism of one who could not, from his education and position, avoid confusing the status established by race with that established by condition, and who would certainly put all that jarred with English ideas down to condition, and all that agreed with them down to race.

I have described what our negroes were on board the ship, and how we dealt with them. I am afraid if any visitor, believing we were morally to blame for having them on board at all, had asked to see them at those meals which I have described, we ourselves would have been taken 'suddenly deaf'!

I have spoken of 'condition,' and the phrase brings me to remark that so far from the word 'slavery' representing a condition, even the glance we have had at it in the East shows the impossibility of defining it. Its one extreme may possibly have been found in the Southern States, its other may very likely lie at Zanzibar, or in Arabia and Persia. At the one end, the surroundings of a slave were something of an agitation towards a servile war—well-meaning, philanthropic men everywhere inciting the negro slave to rebel, or at least to escape. As a barrier against such dangers the owner may have been tempted to impose a compulsory ignorance and an iron discipline on his slave. At Zanzibar, and perhaps in Asia, the surroundings are the peaceable possession and accumulation of property, friendly relations between owner and slave: laws or

customs which give the latter rights; ultimate freedom for those worthy and desirous of it; no objection whatever to educating slaves, and a discipline of the mildest.

Wherein lies the condition of slavery? I must own my failure to lay it down satisfactorily. The being bought and sold, which at first seems something attaching alone to the condition of a slave, belongs more to the conditions of a slave trade, and even dwindles to a fee for the provision of so much labour in Zanzibar.

'One whose labour is forced,' rises next as a possible definition. Yet the Zanzibar slave, who does as he likes provided he pays so much a day to his master, can hardly be called a forced labourer; and, on the other hand, there are abundance of forced labourers in England who call themselves free men—I do not mean forced by circumstances, I mean forced by superior power. But, it will be said, such have previously entered into a contract; the slave's forced labour is without contract on his part? The boy of fifteen enters into a contract with Her Majesty to serve her at sea till he is twenty-eight. The question of willingness is hardly put to him by those who think it right he should go. The school-boy is forced, sometimes most unwillingly, to the labour of school. These instances, however, are but for a term of years; the slave has no prospect of release before him? Even this must fall through wherever slaves own and accumulate property, as at Zanzibar; for, after all, their labour is only worth so much money, for which it may be exchanged.

It is perhaps mere platitude to go over this ground; but it has been necessary in order to show that, after all, we are driven to some vague definition analogous to what has been given of wealth. Slavery is a general status of society, where the labouring branch either is, or is kept, in strict subordination to the other, and is considered to exist only to minister to its pleasures and wants.

Such a state of things being, on assumption, considered as the cause of the degradation, want of progress, and immorality generally concomitant with it, this point may now be looked into.

In a general way it is held by the philanthropist, the missionary, and even the statesman, that slavery is such a block in the path wherever it exists, that neither Christianity, the useful arts, nor even commerce can truly flourish prior to its removal. Such at least must have been a branch of the argument used to destroy it at a blow in Western States. In taking action upon the argument, a missionary or diplomatist might be supposed to confine his efforts to the abolition of the status. If it appears that he only does so in cases where there is force to back him, and speaks exultingly of his progress as a civiliser and a christianiser in the midst of a slavery with which he does not attempt to interfere, I think the fact will allow us to say that slavery is no cause, but must be recognised, and perhaps passed by, as the effect of something deeper.

I select for illustration three cases. First, the forcible suppression of slave-holding among British Indians at Zanzibar, by the power of the British

Government, without the smallest attempt beyond. Secondly, the operations of the great mission to Madagascar, which leaves—or I altogether mistake its policy—slavery to die the natural death in store for it. Thirdly, the testimony of a missionary at Abbeokuta near Lagos. So fierce was the slavery there after the abolition of the export trade, that, according to his account, 'the price was enhanced 300 per cent. during his time.' Yet he describes the progress of the mission as most satisfactory, and speaks of the rise in the price of slaves (the source of supply being open) as a proof of an increasing civilisation.[1]

So far for 'slavery' as the selected cause of that accumulation of evil bordering the shores of the Indian Ocean.

If, however, slavery be not, as it seemed, a cause of what we see, certainly, it is said, the slave trade is. And then the argument runs thus: if we stop the export from Africa we stop the slave trade: if we stop the slave trade we stop all the miseries of Africa itself, slavery amongst them.

The original thesis is upheld in the first place by opinions of the indirect kind. The traveller attributes his mishaps and difficulties with Arabs and natives to a jealous fear lest his explorations should lead to the suppression of a lucrative man-trade.[2] The missionary on the mainland says that the trade in blacks is the degrader of those amongst whom he works, and the great barrier to his success, if not the uprooter of his young

[1] Parl. Rep., African W. Coast, 1865, p. 239.
[2] Livingstone, recent Letters.

Christian plants.[1] The official demands, and even presses for, bolder measures in suppression of a traffic which stands in the way of all progress and leads to infinite confusion and trouble.[2] Then, as an application of the method of difference to the proof, we are referred to a condition of things in Africa where the slave trade is abolished,[3] and we are told that the men who worked for the abolition of the export slave trade 'contemplated but the overthrow of a gigantic evil, the curse of Africa's sons; we see that curse removed, and in place of the slave barracoon we see . . . a free town, many of whose inhabitants, once slaves, are now free men . . . Nay, more; we see the Gospel carried into the old haunts of the slavers; and as the sailor makes for the bar of Lagos, that last haunt of the slave trade, his landmark for the harbour is the spire of an English church, one of three erected there by the Church Missionary Society.'[4]

Other evidence is not of opinion, but of fact. It is directly charged upon the interior slave trade that it is the chief cause of the wars, and, through the wars, of the devastation and depopulation so common in East Africa.[5]

The argument therefore runs, that the interior slave trade causes war and desolation; that through war,

[1] Mr. Rebman, quoted by Brig. Coglan, in Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 115.

[2] Dr. Kirk, in *ibid.*, p. 94.

[3] The export trade only.

[4] See a pamphlet issued by the Society in 1871, 'The Slave Trade of E. Africa,' p. 4.

[5] Livingstone, in Parl. Rep., African W. Coast, 1865, p. 233, and various other places.

desolation, and misery, it produces a condition of things hopeless for the traveller, missionary, and legitimate trader; that the interior slave trade is caused by the export trade; and that this trade, being once abolished, churches will spring up, and freedom flourish.

The picture is a fair one to contemplate. I would I could think it more than paint and canvas.

And first, as to the direct proof that the slave trade is responsible for most of the interior wars in East Africa, for most of the suspended cultivation, the burnt villages, and the devastated districts. Any one who will impartially examine it must acknowledge that the great volume of evidence is not really direct, but of the kind called 'hearsay,' not receivable in any truly judicial enquiry. In a general way, witness after witness bears testimony to the supposition that the Arab slave traders stir up all the interior wars, and that their object is invariably the capture of slaves for sale; but hardly one of these has personally seen or personally known a case where a war was directly due to the slave trader. There is, on the other hand, some direct and overpowering evidence that, whatever may happen exceptionally, wars in East Africa exist quite irrespectively of the slave trade. And the operations of the Arab slave traders have been commended by an eye-witness in the interior as being in that one case at least something very different from the war-raising policy usually ascribed to them.[1] Then, again, we have direct

[1] Livingstone, Parl. Pap., Class B, 1870. He says, 'I tried to follow the river-like portion (of Lake Liemba), but was prevented by a war

testimony of eye-witnesses that in another case, in the midst of an African war, members of the victorious tribe were those on their way to be sold.[1] Then we know—and if we did not know it, our reason might assure us—that a native war is very often a bar to the Arab's trade, and we cannot conceive it probable that he would directly assist to destroy his own business.[2] The best witnesses tell us that the two articles for sale in East Central Africa, ivory and slaves, form, as might be imagined, the merchandise of every returning caravan from the interior. As the ivory is the larger commerce of the two commodities, how can we suppose that the advantage of the larger trade can be made subordinate to the smaller, and that the war which prevents the production of ivory, will be incited for the production of slaves? No one can reasonably doubt that if the interior tribes can obtain, by any means, the supply of their chief 'desirabilities,' they will use such as may be most direct. If the slaves,

which had broken out between the chief of Itawa and a party of ivory traders from Zanzibar. . . I found the Arab party, showed them a letter from the Sultan of Zanzibar, . . and was at once supplied with provisions, cloth, and beads; they showed the greatest kindness and anxiety for my safety and success. *The heads of the party readily perceived that a continuance of hostilities meant shutting up the ivory market.* . . I was glad to see the mode of ivory and slave dealing of these men: it formed such a perfect contrast to that of the ruffians from Kilwa, and to the ways of the Portuguese from Tette.' His books and his later letters constantly show him avoiding districts unconnected with slave trading, on account of the likelihood of attack.

[1] Steere, in Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 73. Compare his general evidence. Rep. Central African Mission, 1862.

[2] Livingstone, *ante.* Also, Steere, Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 71, q. 995. Read Livingstone in Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 16, and compare with the statements of the Wahiou (Ajawa) slaves in Chap. II.

which are to be exchanged for cloth, wire, muskets, and ammunition, can be obtained only by a victorious raid on the property of a neighbouring tribe, no doubt war will follow. If the weak tribe possesses ivory, is it to be supposed that the strong ivory-less tribe will not seize it by force, even if villages go to flame and their inhabitants to the sword in the process? The child sees the glittering toy it covets, and knows no means of acquiring it but by forcible seizure. The nation in its childhood only follows that law. In full proof of this, we have the East African Massai tribe in 1857 bearing down to the extermination of the Waniki, and carrying off in one day the whole of the cattle from the territory near Mombas.[1] We have the Maviti—cattle-plunderers by profession—devastating their borders as a matter of policy, and sweeping down even to Kilwa on a marauding raid in 1867.[2]

But if the slave trade is acquitted of being an exclusive or even a frequent cause of war in the East African interior, it is still asserted that it is directly connected with its depopulation. This view also appears to me to require some checking before it can be safely adopted. Credible witnesses deny it in so far as the assertion goes beyond a depopulation corresponding nearly to the numbers of slaves originally obtained or wasted.[3]

One connexion made between the two facts is a matter generally admitted—namely, the greater range inland of the Arab slave and ivory caravans. If, how-

[1] See Parl. Pap., Class B, 1865, p. 122.
[2] Parl. Pap., Class B., 1869, p. 70 *et seq.*
[3] Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 71.

ever, this were caused by the difficulty of obtaining slaves nearer, we ought to find a marked rise in their price, and a marked diminution of the supply. It does not appear possible to say with certainty that either change has come about. Then, in the very spots supposed to be devastated by the slave trader, we suddenly meet a conquering horde of negroes who altogether prevent trading operations, whether in slaves or other commodities. Thus we learn that scarcely had the missionaries quitted their station near Mombas in Zanzibar territory in 1857 than 'the terrible Massai overran the whole country down to the sea-shore, killing whomsoever they found in their way.'[1] Then in 1867 we have the Maviti defeating the Arab and negro garrison of Kilwa, stopping entirely all trade with the interior and blockading the place inland.[2]

But I cannot accept the statement that war, however produced, is the chief cause of those vast depopulations we hear of from all who visit the interior.

The Central African Mission on the Shiré was plunged into the midst of as great a devastation as could be committed by human means. A war of extermination raged round them, and the conquerors laid waste all inhabited spots within their reach, burnt the villages, trod down the scanty cultivation, and slew or carried away captive the unhappy objects of their wrath. But what man could effect in the way of destruction, was as nothing to the destruction effected by nature a few months afterwards. Although all the sentiments of

[1] Mr. Rebman, in Parl. Pap., Class B, 1865, p. 122, before quoted.
[2] Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 70 *et seq.*, before quoted

those missionaries would tend to make them exaggerate man's powers of destruction, and to underrate the climatic forces exercised in the same direction, it is plainly to be seen in their reports how incomparably more awful than the presence of war was the absence of rain in the valley of the Shiré![1]

[1] See Rep. Central African Mission, 1863, p. 73 *et seq.* Compare 'Expedition to Zambesi,' p. 448 *et seq.* Also Livingstone, in Parl. Rep., Africa (W. Coast), 1865, p. 233; Waller, in Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 65 *et seq.* I know of no stronger, or stranger, evidence of the force of a foregone conclusion in clouding the reason than is disclosed in the above references. A famine, such as had not been known since 1854, swept over the valleys of the Zambesi and the Shiré in 1862. The country was nearly a year without rain. Dr. Livingstone left the Shiré in the autumn of 1861, and did not return to it till January 1863. In his absence the evil had come upon the place, and he saw its final effects. 'There were a few wretched survivors in a village above the Ruo; but the majority of the population was dead. The sight and smell of the dead bodies were everywhere. Many skeletons lay beside the path, where, in their weakness, they had fallen and expired. Ghastly living forms of boys and girls, with dull dead eyes, were crouching beside some of the huts' ('Zambesi,' p. 450). The recital is terrible to read, and men with strong feelings witnessing it would naturally connect the effect with the cause most in their thoughts. Hence (p. 456), 'It is true that famine caused a great portion of the waste of life; but the slave trade must be deemed the chief agent in the ruin, because, as we were informed, in former droughts all the people flocked from the hills down to the marshes, which are capable of yielding crops of maize in less than three months, at any time of the year, and now they were afraid to do so.' But they were steaming through these very marshes at the time, and it was here, on the banks of the river, and in it, that they saw the dead and dying! The slave trade had always been going on in the district, as everywhere else in Africa. The want of rain was exceptional, yet the exceptional desolation is attributed to the normal, not to the abnormal, condition.

If there were no other testimony, this error could not be easily met; but it is completely exposed by the testimony of those who were on the spot the whole time, and saw the devastation from famine altogether separated from any slave-trading cause.

I quote from the Report of the Central African Mission for 1862, p. 75, a description of the state of things, in Dr. Livingstone's absence, surrounding the Mission at Chibisas on the banks of the Shiré in 1862. 'By the middle of September. . . the want of provisions began to be

It is seen then that the direct evidence, when examined, does not bear out the charge made against the

severely felt, and it was only by long journeys up and down the country, undertaken by all in turn, that the children living at the station could be kept from absolute starvation, whilst the native men had great difficulty in providing for themselves, the people in the surrounding villages being for the most part reduced to living on any herbs or roots which they could find in the bush. The scarcity was attributed to the long drought, no rain having fallen for nearly nine months; the corn crops had all failed, and, unhappily, even the seed corn, which should have been kept for the coming sowing time, had been consumed.'

Up to the end of November there was still an entire absence of rain. Again and again the clouds gathered, but were as often drawn off by the surrounding hills. In eleven months only a few showers had fallen. The ground was parched, and the air fiercely hot. The roots, which for some weeks had enabled the natives to drag on a wretched existence, were all gone, and it became too evident that the whole population of the land must perish. 'One dreads,' Mr. Waller writes at this time, 'to meet a man in the path, so famished does he appear.'

When the rains at last came, in the middle of December, we are told (p. 78), 'It was now found impossible to continue even the slight relief which had for a time been afforded to the starving Manganja around. The misery and desolation of the country were becoming every day more and more dreadful to witness; bodies were constantly floating down the river; and two children who had been thrown in by their parents, but whose bodies were too emaciated and distended with hunger to allow them to sink, were rescued while still alive. In the surrounding villages the huts were all the abodes of death, and in every direction were to be seen the ghastly remains of those who had been literally starved to death.'

The pamphlet quotes from Mr. Waller's journal: 'We took a bag of corn to Maduqa, a village about a mile from here, and in which lived many we knew in better times. We had not gone more than 300 yards from our huts before we came to the corpse of a boy who had there lain down and died of hunger. When we arrived at the village we found the body of a man who had that morning died of starvation. . . . Men who have carried heavy burdens for us up to Magomero came tottering towards us, mere animated skeletons. . . . Women in the prime of life, but too weak to stand, crawled towards us on their hands and knees.'

It is needless for me to go on quoting, as I might for pages, to show how the incubus-like idea of the slave trade prevented otherwise judicial minds from putting the case fairly to the jury of their intelligence. But if any one will compare, passage by passage, the statements in the 'Zambesi,' in the 'Reports of the Central African Mission,' and the Blue-books for

interior slave trade, that it is a main cause of the African wars and desolations. If it were possible to subtract the slave trade from the condition of things in Africa, and if it then appeared that wars and devastation ceased, or were strongly mitigated, it would follow, notwithstanding the failure of direct evidence, that the slave trade must so far take rank among causes.

It is not possible to argue thus, for there is no spot in Africa from which the slave trade has been subtracted, without adding the elements of foreign power and foreign law.

There is yet a branch of evidence of the most direct kind which connects depopulation, to a vast extent, with the East African slave trade. It is asserted that there is a waste of life—estimated at four to one—in the carriage of the slaves to the coast.[1] Here the witnesses are innumerable, but only a small minority speak to what they have seen; the remainder relate what they have heard, and most of them only repeat what they understand others have heard.

1865 and 1871, I think he will, even if he do not come to my conclusions, at least admit they are fully justified.

See also Parl. Pap., Class B, 1867, p. 40.

[1] Report of Commission, to Lord Clarendon. I suppose the estimate originates in Dr. Livingstone's dictum in the 'Zambesi,' p. 392: 'We would ask our countrymen to believe us when we say, as we conscientiously can, that it is our deliberate opinion, from what we know and have seen, that not one-fifth of the victims of the slave trade ever become slaves. Taking the Shiré valley as an average, we should say that not even one-tenth arrive at their destination.' It almost seems presumptuous in the face of such a passage to note that I cannot discover any facts mentioned to warrant it, except 'the many skeletons' met with 'amongst the rocks and woods, by the little pools, and along the paths of the wilderness.' This, as we have seen, does not justify the inference; and I do not find they were met with previous to the famine.

I have had a difficulty in finding that any Englishman has yet seen with his own eyes any waste of life which he could charge upon the interior slave trade and upon nothing else; and this, if it be a fact, ought to be kept steadily in mind.[1] I only know of two depositions direct from eye-witnesses; and both these I have noticed cropping up in such various directions as to give the idea of an army of deponents.

One of these accompanied a slave and ivory caravan from Mataka, 300 miles inland, to Kilwa. He says he saw, out of a band of 900 Arabs, porters, old slaves and new slaves—more than 300 of the latter—'not less than 100 deaths,' of which very many were ruthless murders. He says he saw men (slaves) 'killed by the club, or the dagger, or strangled.' He says he saw 'six men (at different times) choked to death: the victims were forced to sit leaning against a tree; a strip of bark or a thong was looped round the stem of the tree, pulled taut from behind, and the slave strangled.' He says he saw 'not less than fifteen slaves clubbed to death by heavy blows between the eyes (which bespattered their faces with blood) or upon the head. Children were felled in this way, and put out of life by repeated blows on the head.' All this was by order of the Arabs.[2]

Such an awful catalogue of horrors could only gain implicit belief in a mind prepared beforehand. I

[1] The only thing I have met to the contrary is in Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 16. Livingstone saw three dead bodies tied to trees, presumably slaves killed. The sepoys being in his company at the same time, I fancy we see the origin of the wonderful stories.

[2] Parl. Pap., Class B, 1868, p. 107.

suppose no one, even with a hearsay knowledge of Arab nature, would be able to accept it completely without either some faith in the witness or some corroboration elsewhere.

Who is the witness? He is a sepoy sent home in disgrace by Livingstone from Mataka, for the crime, amongst others, of running sticks into the open wounds of the camels, in order to baulk the great explorer's further progress! I need hardly hint more to any one who knows the ingenuity of the Hindoo in the art of lying in the direction expected of him.[1]

The other eye-witness only speaks of deaths after arrival at the coast. He draws an awful picture of a slave barracoon near Kilwa, where the dead and the dying were massed with the living in a horrid jumble.[2] Here was depopulation direct and fearful, and were it not for a certain coloured style, the story might be accepted as sworn evidence. There is, however, enough incongruity between the description given by M. Ménon, and the general character of the Arab and his material appliances,[3] to make me lay stress upon the colouring.

But supposing it were admitted that neither of these eye-witnesses swerved a hair's breadth from the bare truth, and that the Arab slave-trader was the ruthless destroyer of his property described, how immensely behind the estimated depopulation does their testimony

[1] Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 67.

[2] See C. M. S. pamphlet, quoted at p. 472. I have not found the original.

[3] The abundant use of 'chains' described, will be a difficulty in the way of most naval officers' belief.

fall! The sepoy, starting with a caravan of 900 all told, only reports 100 deaths. Supposing half the caravan were newly enslaved, he should have reported, according to the estimate, no less than 360 deaths. He speaks to but about twenty-five per cent.—not eighty per cent.—of losses by the way, notwithstanding a system of destruction unexampled even in the annals of slave-trading.

I do not know, in short, any real evidence on which the awful estimate of four to one can be maintained. It is more than a comfort to believe that not above twenty or thirty per cent. of the slaves started from the interior perish by the way; and in accepting that belief as more reasonable than the other, I by no means mean to say that any comfort is derivable from the fact that it still leaves us to think that perhaps 40,000 negroes are marched annually, most of them sorely against their will, from the interior of East Africa towards the coast.

The course of this very cursory examination into evidence, has been to establish that neither slavery nor the slave trade are the primary causes they are usually considered. On the evidence they can only take rank as prominent effects of the defective civilisation of Africa, which embraces want of courage and of moral sense, and results in absence of settled government and of industry, which in their turn produce war, desolation: slavery and the slave trade.

The question for England in her dealings with Africa therefore becomes that which the physician must put to himself in dealing with organic disease.

If the disease is hopeless he contents himself with alleviating local symptoms, and gives up the patient's life in despair.

If he has reason to believe that the disease will yield to treatment, his main efforts are directed to the cause, and though he does not neglect to remove or palliate the local symptoms, these do not so completely engage his thoughts as the task of attacking the seat of the disease —first, through the operation of nature; secondly, by the assistance of art.

In the disease under which Africa suffers, that local symptom most clear to us is the slave trade; that part of it believed to be most agonising, is the interior slave trade. How to alleviate it is one question which may engage the mind of the wise physician. But it will not be permitted to him to bend the whole of his thoughts to this point, unless he first gives up as hopeless the cure of the central disease. No Englishman does this seriously; and therefore I may proceed on the understanding that as he believes the organic complication will yield to treatment, the only question is how to subordinate wisely the necessary dealing with local symptoms to the great end in view.

What sort of treatment may be applied which will materially reduce this interior slave trade in East Africa? The reply is that we should suppress the export of slaves beyond sea, and we are told that the interior trade will then either cease entirely or become insignificant. Nay, we are referred to the West Coast, and told to look there as to a case where the treatment has been signally successful. There, it is said, wars

have ceased, commerce flourishes, the slave trade is dead, and the missionary church rises.

But what is the painful, yet undoubted fact about the West Coast, now that the export slave trade is suppressed? It is that the articles exported are slave-produced, that a raging slave trade sweeps over the interior, and that furious wars everywhere surround the British settlements.

It is strange that facts so evident and really so well known should need quotations to support them: yet so completely is our wish father to our thought, that we are told in so many words to look at British settlements on the West Coast as the effects of a suppressed export of slaves, instead of their being one of the instruments employed in that suppression. When we are desired to look for the effects of removing the export of slaves by sea, we assuredly must look, not to British settlements or to ports where British influence extends—for these are causes which might be added while the export remained—but we must look to regions where British influence does not extend, or does not extend sufficiently to produce an effect. Then we shall have a portion of Africa where the single symptom of export beyond sea has been removed, and where nothing else has been added to account for any observed change.

But there is no change. Take the Gambia in 1865, and what is seen outside British limits? A cultivation of ground nuts by *slaves* for export; a falling off in the trade owing 'to the war amongst the native

tribes.'[1] 'In the wars which are constantly taking place between the natives, the prisoners are made slaves, and are either retained to work for their masters, or are sold to other parts of the country for the same purpose.'[2]

Then the Gold Coast:—'The natives of the Gold Coast have been termed a race of slaves, and it has been stated by one who knew them well that every man in the country is liable to the condition of a slave.'[3]

Inland of the very Lagos to which we are specially asked to turn our eyes, we have interminable wars—raging, I believe, in full force at the present moment.[4]

'In the wars which are constantly taking place in the interior, prisoners are made on both sides (just as they were between the Ajawa and Manganja when Livingstone was in the valley of the Shiré, and are now) . . . their captors are generally anxious to sell or barter them away.'[5]

It would be mere weariness to continue quoting out of the mouths of witnesses who accept constant wars, constant capture of slaves, and unending slavery as too much matters of course to need comment. But I might sum up the whole in the words before referred to, of a witness about whom there can be no doubt, as he utters them in evidence of an improved state of things: 'the price of slaves was enhanced 300 per cent.' in the process of totally suppressing the export

[1] Parl. Rep., Africa (W. Coast), 1865, p. 344.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 347. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 357. [4] *Ibid.*, p. 360.
[5] *Ibid.*, p. 13.

trade, and the Abbeokutans 'had learnt to know that it was more profitable to keep the slaves on the farms than to sell them.'[1]

As the facts are not to be denied, witnesses, whose motives cannot be condemned, attempt to palliate this state of things. The wars, as they cannot be connected with an export of slaves beyond sea, are surrendered as the effects of any slave trade, and the capture of slaves is left as the effect, and not the cause, of the bloodshed.

No one points out that if the price of slaves has risen 300 per cent. in Abbeokuta, that increased demand must have precisely the same effect on the interior slave trade as the same increase at Kilwa would have.

Slavery under negroes is represented as something altogether different from negro slavery under other races, something much milder and even better for the negro slave.[2] But can we believe it? Has the uncivilised African ever shown himself a gentle or a thoughtful being? Does Dahomey produce a race of quiet contemplative souls caring only for the welfare of their dependents? Will the man who now sells his child for a couple of yards of calico, stay his passing desires because they interfere with the comfort of his slave?[3]

If I thought these things, there was amongst the official documents in my ship one which must have

[1] Rev. W. Gollmer, Parl. Rep. 1865, p. 239.

[2] Livingstone, in Parl. Rep. 1865, p. 229, etc. Ord in *ibid.*, p. 348, etc.

[3] When Livingstone speaks in condemnatory terms of the Portuguese slave traders from Tette, he must, I think, speak of *negroes*, for it was from the hands of negroes he freed the slaves met with.

effectually banished my thought. On the back of the parchment certificate of the services of one of our Kroomen was written these words:—

'This man was given to Commodore Wilmot from the platform at Dahomey during the "customs" in January 1863, and I leave him as a legacy to the service, to be employed and taken care of.—(Signed) A. P. E. WILMOT.' He was almost in process of slaughter when a complimentary thought crossed the mind of the savage king and saved him.

I cannot believe that these things are to be palliated. I cannot see that, whether the negro captured in the interior is marched 1,000 miles to the coast, or 950 miles to a point short of it, it makes much difference to him. Nay, if he is still to exist as a slave, I sometimes think there is more chance for him at Zanzibar or in Arabia than in Ashantee!

But one thing shines out clear and distinct; the total suppression of the export slave trade by sea will not of itself suppress the trade by land, nor, sad as it may be to say it, mitigate in any material degree its existing horrors.[1]

It follows that while we may very reasonably aim at

[1] Dr. Livingstone meets the general argument, that a suppression of the export trade from the East Coast of Africa will only alter the ultimate destination of the slave, and retain him on the coast, by saying, practically, that it takes an island, whence the slaves cannot easily escape, to support a slave trade (see Parl. Pap., Class B, 1869, p. 15). He does not bring West Coast facts into his purview. But it is perhaps singular that he should adopt such an idea when he was at the same time denouncing the slavery of the Southern States of America as the worst the world ever saw. I fear his dictum is no more than an amiable hope expressed in the form of reason.

repressing the export slave trade by sea, as a symptom, the removal of which may do good, and cannot possibly do harm, it is to be feared that the worse symptom of an interior slave trade is beyond our reach, except by such measures as we can adopt towards removing the cause of the whole disease.

There are very many physicians in consultation on this point, and though all are agreed that the one thing should be the removal of all obstructions to the legitimate efforts of nature, and the judicious application of art at the right time and in the right place, their common voice carries them no further.

Perhaps the loudest of all the demands is that 'legitimate commerce' should be applied to the patient. Let us, therefore, examine this remedy first.

It has been largely applied to the West Coast, and we may there view its effects. I fear they are not encouraging. Where there is most commerce there is most slavery, and by consequence most raids into the interior for labour. Always excepting British territory, an increase of export means an increase of slaves, or of the work got out of them. Does it, after all, make much difference to the negro slave whether we export him bodily or export only his labour? We save him a sea voyage by our legitimate commerce—no more.

Where we see a legitimate trade and a trade in slaves run side by side, as at Zanzibar, in the most friendly manner, it effectually damps our faith in the possibility of one being absolutely inimical to the other: but where we see the illegitimate commodity pass inland into the interior of Africa, and come back for

export in the shape of a legitimate commodity, our hope in any direct help from commerce must die.

This was the case from the valley of the Shiré up the Zambesi. Slaves obtained on the Shiré were marched across to Tette. There some of them went down to the coast for direct export: others were taken inland, and bartered for ivory, which was likewise sent coastwise.[1]

So that commerce by itself will, if it affects the negro slave at all, directly decrease his chances of freedom. It will either convert his labour, or himself, into an exchangeable commodity, valued outside the continent as much as he is.

But, another physician will say, it is not to commerce itself you must look, but to its influences. To this it must be answered that there are two influences in commerce—one exerted by the thing itself, the other by those who carry it on. That exerted by the thing itself we have seen; and unless we are prepared to change the agents by which it is carried on, their influences will be those we now deplore. 'Yes,' the physician acquiesces, 'we propose to change the agents gradually, gently. In fact we should merely assist the natural processes of nature to throw off the disease. We should substitute the English merchant, with his better knowledge, if not with his kindlier heart; his mere example in the haunts of all this backward civilisation will give Commerce that honourable place she at present lacks, will show the dignity of labour, and the happiness attendant on energy and courage.'

[1] 'Zambesi,' p. 406, Waller in Parl. Rep. 1871, p. 65.

As there does seem some connexion between this philosopher's views and what he aims at, we may look at two attempts of this kind which have been made in East Africa, and scan their results.

'Mr. Sunley[1] came originally to the Mozambique with some command of capital, and with the intention of operating largely in the markets of its neighbourhood. He was accompanied or followed by four associates, of whom two died, a third was lost at sea, and the fourth broke his back. His correspondents in London failed: his agents at Nossi Bé and Zanzibar operated for him at a loss. A power of attorney was used to his detriment at Mauritius; and the Portuguese authorities on the East Coast of Africa seized his schooner on plea of its having entered Angoxa. His stores at Johanna were burnt down.

'Eventually Mr. Sunley found himself in the island of Johanna (then in a politically unsettled condition), without capital, and without any associate or European assistance. Nothing daunted, he set to work; consolidated the government, explored the island, obtained a grant for a period of forty years of his present estate at Pomony; cleared it; organised 500 men who had never laboured before, into sugar planters and boilers; put up his sugar mill; erected his own steam-engine; taught a Caffre boy to drive it; learned himself, while teaching others, the art of sugar-growing; built his own carts; broke in his own cattle; reared his own factory

[1] This account is taken from Col. Pelly's letter to the Bombay Government in October 1861.

and dwelling-houses; cut his own roads; surveyed his own estate; discovered and land-marked his port.

'This was not all: a small currency was required for the payment of his labourers. He bought up the copper currency at Mozambique, and re-stamped it at Johanna. Silver he found in the French five-franc pieces, and these he cut into quarters for shilling currency. He would not distil rum, nor allow tobacco to be grown; but he laboured early and late with his own hands to instil regular and orderly habits into his savage followers. He attended carefully to their complaints, both physical and mental. The results of his years of heavy labours are now (1861) visible in a most thriving estate: a contented, sober, and healthy-looking body of negroes: and a heavy harvest of splendid cane, realising 28*l.* to 30*l.* per ton in the Mauritius market.'

The 500 labourers spoken of were of course slaves; not Mr. Sunley's own, but made over by the chiefs of Johanna. Mr. Sunley, however, paid his labourers regular wages. His relations with them were, therefore, such as every resident at Zanzibar must now fall into with his servants, be their number large or small.

One would suppose that a picture such as this wanted nothing but extension over a larger canvas. Here was one part of Dr. Livingstone's ideal mission in full work, wanting only the clerical half to make it as perfect as either theory or practice could suggest.[1] Mr. Sunley reaped his reward in being made British

[1] Dr. Livingstone himself was delighted with Mr. Sunley's work, but only deplored that it was not carried out on the mainland of Africa.

Consul for the Comoro Islands, and diligently employed himself in aiding to suppress the export slave trade to them and to Madagascar.

But in some way it came to be pressed upon the English Government that Mr. Sunley was employing in his useful work the only sort of labour available—slave labour; and that all his usefulness, all his energy, all the real good he was doing for the negro race must be blotted out.

In October 1863, Mr. Sunley received a despatch from the Secretary for Foreign Affairs acquainting him that he must either give up his work—for it came to that—or the Consulship.

Mr. Sunley replied:

'I am fully sensible of the honour of holding the appointment of Her Majesty's Consul at the Comoro Islands, but if it is imperative on me either to resign my commission or dismiss the labourers now employed on my estate, and thus put a ruinous termination to my undertakings here just as they are becoming remunerative, and after devoting many years and spending much money in prosecuting them, I beg reluctantly to place the resignation of my commission in your lordship's hands.'[1]

Accordingly, Earl Russell wrote—in 1865—concluding our official connexion with Mr. Sunley and our claims on his valuable services in suppressing the slave trade, in these words:—

'I have accordingly to acquaint you that on the 30th of September next, your name will be struck off

[1] Slave Trade Papers, Class B, 1865, p. 85.

the consular list, and your salary as Her Majesty's Consul for the Comoro Islands will cease.

'From reports received by Her Majesty's Government, *I have every reason to believe that you have, by your example and enterprise, done much to promote the welfare and prosperity of the labouring classes in Johanna, both free and slave;* but, as I have before explained to you, it is impossible that Her Majesty's Government can tolerate the employment of slaves by an officer holding Her Majesty's consular commission.'

Turn now to the case of Messrs. Fraser and Co. at Zanzibar. This firm, in the year 1864, entered into an agreement with the Sultan Syud Majid by which they undertook to establish—and did establish—an extensive sugar estate and manufactory. Messrs. Fraser and Co. were to provide skilled labour and machinery, and to work the whole thing. Syud Majid was to provide 500 unskilled labourers, who were to be fed and clothed, but not to be paid wages, by Messrs. Fraser. He was also to assign land for the plantation and certain sugar mill-work already belonging to him to Messrs. Fraser. The profits were to be shared between the contracting parties.[1]

The acting consul at Zanzibar, having drawn attention to the fact that the workers in this great industrial enterprise would be slaves, and having hoped that Her Majesty's Government would not tolerate such a state of things, some correspondence, which I have not seen, appears to have followed, for the next thing we learn officially is that the Sultan (as a means

[1] Slave Trade Papers, Class B, 1868, p. 121.

of settling the question) had 'freed 711 souls working under the contract of an English sugar-planter. (H. A. Fraser and Co.)'[1]

Our Foreign Minister, in expressing his satisfaction at the matter being 'thus happily settled,' instructed the consul at Zanzibar to inform Messrs. Fraser that 'Her Majesty's Government *would not adopt any proceedings against them, nor enforce any penalties which they had incurred by the violation of British laws* for the prevention of the slave trade, provided that they will undertake on their part to abstain for the future from all similar offences.'[2]

These two instances sufficiently illustrate the immense difficulty of applying this particular remedy of legitimate commerce in the hands of approved agents to the East African disease.

In both these cases, England, instead of following the physician's advice of removing obstructions, and allowing nature—or natural progress—to do its powerful work, stepped in with a purely empirical medicine. In the one case she shook off the allegiance of her own son, a man she should be proud of; in the other she would have shaken the negro back into what she considers a hopeless state for him, but for the generous assistance of an Arab whom she despises as uncivilised, and heaps with infamy as the oppressor of the negro!

As the first physician's advice is found to be useless,

[1] Papers, Class B, 1868, p. 106.

[2] Slave Trade Papers, Class B, 1868, p. 111. The case is clear enough for the purpose of my illustration, but beyond this it is a puzzle.

and that given by the second is rejected, let us listen to the third.

He is a grave man: slow in his speech and hesitating in his manner. The other physicians in consultation begin to talk between themselves, and it baulks him a little at first, but he still delivers himself as follows:—

'Whether your commerce by itself, or in the hands of these agents, whom at the present moment it is inconvenient to employ, is to produce an effect, you must both own that you intend to produce it by acting indirectly on the mind of the negro. My proposal is that you should do this directly. The agents I employ will supersede no one, for my cure is new in the part of the world you are dealing with—in fact, when my cure becomes old, nature produces those agents which at first I must introduce artificially. My agents will not clash with any such sentiments as stand in the way of the planter or the man of commerce. It is true that in the part of the world of which we speak, my agents must be served, and as the servers there always belong to somebody else, the fact of their wanting service will call upon them to employ slave labour. But the difference between my agents and yours is, that whilst yours make a money profit out of the slave's labour, mine but get the equivalent of their money in that labour which is necessary for their existence.

'Formerly, my agents were somewhat less business-like than they now are. They had perhaps some confusion in their minds between a polished Athenian and a Maviti negro. But they have got over that

confusion of idea, and are now pretty well aware that the education of the young mind—if it be a right education—will very probably produce a better old mind; that if part of this education embraces a certain system of morality—to go no further—which enforces a habit of asking, "How should I like what I propose to do to my brother?" it is not impossible the habit might become chronic.

'It is supposed also that if it were shown to a young negro mind that there was a difference between a lie and a truth, he would retain some such notion when he grew up.

'It is further supposed that minds so instructed, when they come to rub, in their own language, against other minds, would produce the usual effect of greater knowledge, and that each would rub more than it became rubbed.

'Thus we suppose that our agents will be like stones dropped into a pool of water. Immediately round them there will be the strongest ripple, and this will grow less and less, but will still be a ripple, to the very verge of the lake.'

'Just so,' here objects one of the consultees. 'You drop your stone in, and he makes a ripple for a time, but afterwards all becomes just as it was before.'

'That would be so,' observes the grave Doctor in reply, 'if we did not continually drop stones in. But this is what we really propose to do, and we find by experience of these cases that by-and-by we need drop no more stones in, for the ripples are reactionary and ultimately support themselves.'

'That is all very well as a simile,' continues the objector, 'but what have you done in time past? In cases of this kind, we like to see facts. What effect have you produced in West Africa, for instance? We know you have done nothing as yet in East Africa.'

'We are well aware that as yet neither the wars, nor slavery, nor the slave trade, those evils that we aim at, are yet touched by us in West Africa. You yourselves fail to touch them except by force: but our attack upon them is still going on; yours has altogether ceased. What we want for our operations is a settled Government; we can do little in tumult and war; so what we have done is chiefly in British territory, but we push beyond it wherever we can; and we consider—so vast is the disease—that when we get a chief to support our schools with his authority, we have really got him to think one degree above the thought which prompts him, perhaps the next minute, to burn down his neighbour's village.'

'But,' the objector again comes in, 'you will be several hundred years, at the rate you are going, before you induce a single African chief to abolish slavery and the rest of the evils.'

'Even so,' replies the grave Doctor; 'perhaps that is what it comes to. We deal with many thousand years of one sort of education, and must not be surprised if it takes a hundred or two to supplant it, when we use no weapons harder than persuasion. Yet though we may not touch the particular symptoms you speak of, we shall have made such progress towards the seat of the disease that we trust to see the

symptoms pass away of themselves. Such, however, is the remedy we propose. Has any one a better?'

It may to many readers appear something of an anti-climax to arrive at the conclusion that, for this East African disease, there is no other medicine but the missionary. Yet that is what appears on the face of things. He is the only man whom British law will not hamper in those regions; he is the only man with aims high enough, or courage strong enough, to go and live in one spot in Africa for the purpose of civilising it. If, however, an army of missionaries could be poured into the continent this year, the vast mass would be either in full retreat, or would be slain upon the field of battle, before the autumn. Pioneers in plenty will be wanted to clear the way before anything like a missionary advance can be made into East Central Africa.

If it were possible to believe that England would reverse her more modern policy of abandoning most things which cost money and give trouble, and drawing a line round herself beyond which she will not advance, one might say that as she has dealt nationally, and not individually, with African questions so far as interrupting forcibly the exit of negroes from Africa, so she makes herself responsible to go further. It might then be pointed out that the only real advance she has made upon the non-civilisation of Africa is through her settlements on the coast. It is within their precincts that the missionary points to his churches and schools. It is there alone that their work has at last become self-supporting. And if they

are able to push forward at all, it is only by making British ground the base of their operations and keeping their communications with it open.

If we point with triumph to the West Coast, and look forward to pointing with the same triumph to the East, we must, to be reasonable, look to using the means which have there been instrumental. If we neglect them, and turn our attention exclusively to those which have not yet proved instrumental in any degree beyond themselves, we are merely heaping up weariness and disappointment for the future.

Many witnesses of various shades of opinion have exclaimed against our policy towards our captured negroes. It seems, without using the strong language which has been applied, quite certain that, as we nationally interfere with the future of the negroes captured by us at sea, so we should nationally provide a future for them better than that, or at least as good as that, from which they were forcibly withdrawn by our means.

The present system of apprentices in our colonies seems likely to fail simply from the difficulty of so disposing of them. And then, after all, the status of an apprentice is as bad as that of a slave during his apprenticeship; he must work, and if it be against his will, whatever methods are found necessary in the case of the slave, must also, as the man remains the same, be found necessary in the case of the apprentice. Then, after the apprenticeship is over, there is no future whatever before the unfortunate freeman. If the master, stretching legality, will not

permit him to 'strike,' perhaps it is the best thing for the negro, but it may be dangerous for the master.

Were we dealing with things, as much as we are with names, in these questions, it might I think be said that our best course, as it would certainly be our easiest, would be to hand all negroes captured beyond the limits over to the Sultan of Zanzibar for his disposal. The name of such a transaction, however, utterly forbids it, although the effect would be to lower the value of the slave, and decrease the profit on his export from the interior. It seems quite clear, on the other hand, that unless there be powers of discipline equivalent to what the Arab now employs, legally conferred—or illegally assumed, which is worse than anything—employers of labour at Zanzibar will not thank us for the free negro.

Supposing that, looking all these difficulties straight in the face, and endeavouring to do justice at whatever cost, and above all things not to be frightened by names, we determined on an assumption of territory on the East coast of Africa. It would be primarily a depôt for liberated slaves; secondarily, a basis for beginning those grand philanthropic advances into the interior which the traveller presses on us.

The possible locality has been indicated by Dr. Kirk, and it seems to me that Port Durnford, in lat. 1·13 S., is the spot pointed out by its nature and position for our occupation.

The river is easy of access, carries deep water for some distance inland, and could accommodate a number of ships. If it possesses fresh water and a

sufficiently healthy climate, it ought to be a suitable point for the experiment. The effect of a British settlement there would, as I have already pointed out, deal a more heavy blow to the Northern export trade in slaves than anything we have yet attempted or proposed, except perhaps, the acquisition of Zanzibar itself.

It is to be hoped that, if in despair of anything else answering, we make this great plunge, it will not be attempted until we have made up our minds to pay heavily; to lose some—perhaps of our best—lives, and to undergo very many years of weariness and disappointment before anything like a tangible result appears.

It is also to be hoped that we are far enough removed from the turmoil of 'abolition' to look at the negro as something between a saint and a fiend, when we begin to deal with him in the new settlement.

Time was in the navy when we shot, hung, and flogged, to obtain that obedience which we now almost permanently secure by punishments at which even a schoolboy would smile. We have learnt to know that discipline raises instead of lowering the man subject to it; and we consider that the English man-of-war's man, after fourteen or fifteen years of forced labour, is one of the finest specimens of an Englishman we can present to the world, a man eminently qualified to stand alone, and to take his place with confidence beside his fellows.

Strangely enough, we have the black man-of-war's man, trained in a school of discipline covering some generations. We can put our hand on him as one of

the finest specimens of the negro, a man eminently qualified to stand alone, and to take his place beside his fellows.

That which has been employed to develope the man-of-war's man, and the Krooman, I see no reason to doubt will make the East African negro a useful member of society. If we are ready to govern our hypothetical settlement not on the principles of the republic, but on those found so efficient in H.M.'s ships, we may, with more speed than we think for, make the settlement self-supporting, and relieve ourselves from considering a question to which no one has yet ventured to assign a fair side. In only one thing should the captured negro be placed differently as regards his government from the man-of-war's man. The latter starts fit for freedom; the former should prove his fitness and his desire, by purchasing it, before it can become his.

But even while I write, I know we shall not look at matters in this way; the very most we shall be prepared for is the continuance of the present system in a new locality. And then I sometimes think that the destinies of the East African negro will not, after all, come into our hands.

There has grown up in the centre of Europe a power whose aims are wider and more distinct than those of England. She has never shown herself frightened at a name, nor does she hesitate about embarking on a course of policy whose end may be centuries distant. That power is second to us in material interest in East Africa. Already, we are told, she is looking thither as

The
SLAVE TRADING WATERS
of the
INDIAN OCEAN.

to a field worthy of her enterprise; it is to be hoped we are either ready to do and dare, or to give place, should the time come, to anyone ready to take up the question at the point where we have left it.

The termination of my visit to Zanzibar was also the end of my slave-catching 'experiences.' They grew more sad as time drew on, and I see the change is visible in what I have written.

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